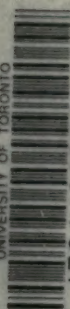


THE · LYCEUM · THEATRE
AND · HENRY · IRVING

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



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AUSTIN · BRERETON



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THE LYCEUM AND HENRY IRVING

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From the Painting by Edwin Long, R.A.

Hentschel-Colourtype.

SIR HENRY IRVING AS HAMLET.

THE LYCEUM AND
HENRY IRVING: BY
AUSTIN BRERETON



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PREFACE

It was my original intention in regard to this history to write a book, about half the size of the present volume, dealing chiefly with the period of Henry Irving's long connection with the theatre. The feeling of public sympathy for the great actor-manager in reference to the closing of the play-house was so strongly expressed, that it occurred to me that the moment was appropriate for a record of his work during his occupation of the building which he has made celebrated for all time in the chronicles of the stage and in those of London. For the rest, I knew something of the Keeleys, of the Vestris management, of the Planché extravaganzas, of the Fechter *régime*, of Charles Dillon and Marie Wilton at the Lyceum. But little else was familiar even to students of the stage like myself, and there was an air of obscurity over the whole thing. I consequently thought, at the outset, that a preliminary chapter or two would suffice for the completion of the history down to the year 1871, more especially as the other writers on the subject had dismissed the matter very briefly. But on pursuing my researches, I was struck by the exceptional amount of interesting material which could be extracted from divers sources, and, encouraged by the publishers, who gave me a free hand in regard to space and illustrations, I attempted the writing of an exhaustive history.

The task was a formidable one, but I was doubly fortunate at the very beginning. In the first place, I observed a statement which has been repeated frequently during the last century, and has even appeared in print within the last fortnight. This is to the effect that the Lyceum was at one time used as a Roman Catholic chapel. I marvelled at this and determined to arrive at the truth. I have, I think, succeeded, and thereby hangs a tale. After much trouble, I managed to detect the original offender.

This was one Joseph Moser, author of *The Adventures of Timothy Twig, Esq., "poetical epistles,"* published in 1794. It was Mr. Moser who, in the *European Magazine*, "very jocosely described the various purposes to which this dejected fabric has been consigned." And this is what Mr. Moser said: "One time, in an evening, a square paper lanthorn, in illuminated characters, informed the public that books, &c., were to be sold by auction; at another the ingenious Mr. Flockton, with a brazen trumpet and a brazen face, announced that the facetious Mr. Punch and his merry family, were ready to receive company of *any description*. This room had first been used as a Roman Catholic private chapel, and in our times had, we think, been the receptacle of Wild Beasts, the school of defence, the audience chamber of those beautiful Honynhums, the panther, mare, and colt; the apartment wherein the white negro girl and the porcupine man held their levees; and, in short, applied to many other purposes equally extraordinary."

Now, a reference to the following pages will show that the Lyceum was first used as a picture-gallery. It pleads guilty to the wild beasts and to Flockton, but the Roman Catholic chapel is all a myth. Anxious to ascertain if there was any foundation for the assertion, I made many diligent inquiries. Nothing was known at Archbishop's House, Westminster; and then, thinking that possibly one of the Lyceum saloons had been used as a temporary place of worship by the congregation of the church of SS. Anselm and Cecilia—the Sardinian Chapel, Lincoln's Inn Fields—after the sacking of the building during the Gordon Riots, I put myself into communication with Miss Johanna H. Harting, and the Rev. John Dunford, who were good enough to search their respective records on my behalf. Miss Harting—whose Catholic London Missions is an invaluable contribution to London history—wrote to me a few days ago saying that, despite all her inquiries, she could find no confirmation of the statement. Nor could the pastor of the Sardinian chapel discover any clue to the mystery. I believe that the trap into which the facetious Moser fell, and into which he has been so readily followed, was that Evelyn celebrated Christmas Day, 1657, by attending service in the private chapel attached to Exeter House. He was arrested

by Cromwell's soldiers while doing so, the circumstances being fully related in his diary. The first Lyceum was certainly built on part of the ground belonging to Exeter House, but the chapel which Evelyn attended was not, as the ingenious, but ignorant, Moser should have known, a Roman Catholic one. The Lyceum, though, has an interesting connection with the Church of England, for it contributes its portion of the rates to no less than three parishes—St. Mary-le-Strand, St. Michael's, Burleigh Street, and St. Martin's-in-the-Fields. It also contains, in the ground of its scene-dock, one of the boundary points of the Duchy of Lancaster.

Once started on the track of discovery, the way was comparatively easy. For, in an unexpected quarter, I found much information and kindly help, extended spontaneously and most generously. Mr. E. Gardner, to my lasting gratitude, gave me access to his priceless collection of London prints and cuttings, and allowed his house to be invaded by my photographer. So that I have been enabled to bring to light many curious details which otherwise would have remained unknown to the public. Eighteen of the earlier illustrations are due to the kindness of Mr. Gardner in allowing me to copy them, and of these only four are to be found in the British Museum.

I am greatly indebted in other quarters. The Baroness Burdett-Coutts and Mr. Burdett-Coutts, M.P., allowed me to copy, in colour, the painting, by Edwin Long, of Henry Irving as Hamlet; and Sir Henry Irving let me do the same in regard to Mr. Sargent's picture of Miss Ellen Terry as Lady Macbeth. When it is reflected that this meant the dismantling of rooms and the keeping of the pictures away from their homes for six weeks, it will be realised that my obligation is no light one. Mr. J. H. Leigh, with a ready courtesy which makes me the more his debtor, permitted me to copy the four portraits of Edmund Kean from his collection, that of Richard III. being done direct from the original oil painting, which he owns. I am also indebted to Mr. Forbes Robertson for the reproduction of his scene from *Much Ado About Nothing* at the Lyceum; to the proprietors of the *Graphic* for the portrait entitled *The Knight of the Stage*, published by them in 1896; to Messrs. Bradbury, Agnew and Co., for permission to use six of the illustrations

of the Beef Steak Society, which they published in 1871; and to Messrs. M. B. Foster and Sons, the possessors of the chair used by King George IV. and the Duke of Sussex, for granting me the privilege of reproducing it. Mr. Augustin Rischgitz has been of great assistance in photographing several of the hundred and twenty-two illustrations which the book contains, and with his expert knowledge of old prints. The photographs of Miss Ellen Terry have been selected from the unique pictures taken by Messrs. Window and Grove, whose portraits of Sir Henry Irving in private dress, and of the late William Terriss, Mr. Forbes Robertson, and Mr. George Alexander have also been used. It would be ungracious of me if I did not take this opportunity of thanking the officials of the reading, newspaper, and print rooms of the British Museum, and those of St. Martin's Library, for their courtesy. As for the personal friends who have helped me—one, especially, who found time, amid the pressure of his own onerous duties, to read some of my proofs when a temporary trouble had affected my eyes, and from which I was rescued by the skill of Sir Anderson Critchett—I do not mention their names, but they will, I am sure, feel that I am none the less grateful.

In conclusion, the members of the Lyceum company will, I trust, understand that it has been impossible to refer to all their individual performances from 1871 to 1902. The limits of a book, which is now much larger than it was ever intended to be, had to be considered. Their record, however, is preserved in the casts of the Irving productions. Mr. Frank Tyars, who joined the Lyceum forces in May, 1877, is the oldest surviving member of the acting company. But Mr. H. J. Loveday, whose services as stage-manager have been of such great value to the theatre, dates his connection with it from February, 1877; Mr. Bram Stoker came to the Lyceum in the autumn of the following year. Their names occupied their accustomed place in the programme on the afternoon of Saturday, July 19, 1902, when the last performance in the existing building took place.

A. B.

19th October, 1903.

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THE LYCEUM AND HENRY IRVING

CHAPTER I

1772-1790

The neighbourhood of the Lyceum in the Eighteenth Century—The Society of Artists of Great Britain—The Lyceum established, 1772—Flockton, the showman—Description of the Lyceum in 1781—It becomes a home of debate—An air balloon and wax-works—An art exhibition—Gas at the Lyceum—The ancestry of Edmund Kean—Cartwright and the Musical Glasses—An Irish Giant, the Gentle Art of Boxing, dwarfs, and the “wonderful American Elk.”

THE year 1772 produced, by a curious coincidence, and within a few feet of each other, a noted newspaper and the origin of a famous playhouse. In that year, and for over half a century afterwards, the Strand at the corner of Wellington Street was very different from the aspect with which we are familiar. Burleigh Street and Wellington Street did not exist, the old houses running in an irregular line from Exeter 'Change, which was obliterated when the former thoroughfare was made to Catherine Street. Even as I write, some of these landmarks are fast disappearing; new

buildings have sprung up at the lower end of Wellington Street and in the Strand, while part of Catherine Street has been swallowed up by Aldwych. Almost parallel with the Strand, Exeter Street extended from Catherine Street. Originally, it was terminated at the west end by the wall of old Bedford House. So that when Dr. Johnson came to his first lodging in London he must have approached it from Catherine Street, which, by the way, was spelt with a "K" in those times. One Morris, a staymaker, has been handed down to posterity as the individual whose roof thus sheltered the learned lexicographer in 1737. In his Exeter Street garret Johnson wrote a great speech for Pitt and finished his poem on London. He was thus drawing from his own experiences when he alluded to "the dungeons of the Strand." From his miserable lodging he threaded his way through the unpaved mazes of Covent Garden to the Pine Apple tavern in New Street "just by"—it ran between King Street and St. Martin's Lane and vanished, in 1860, when Garrick Street was constructed. Here, thanks to his frugality and perspicuity, he "dined very well for eightpence, and with very good company. Several of them had travelled. They expected to meet every day; but did not know one another's names. It used to cost the rest a shilling, for they drank wine; but I had a cut of meat for sixpence, and bread for a penny, and gave the waiter a penny; so that I was quite well served, nay better than the rest, for they gave the waiter nothing."

Between Exeter Street and the Strand were two narrow passages, containing slum dwellings, called Exchange Alley and Exeter Court. The latter, in the course of time, was merged into Burleigh Street, and there, in after

years, was made the private door of the Lyceum Theatre through which princes and players, authors and artists, painters, sculptors, musicians, many of the great and illustrious personages of the nineteenth century, have frequently passed. But much of interest was to happen before that brilliant period. In 1772, the *Morning Post* was started. Twenty-four years later it was sold to Daniel Stuart and Christie, the auctioneer, for £600, that small sum including the purchase, not only of the copyright, but the premises and plant. Coleridge, Southey, Lamb, and Wordsworth wrote for it, and it was alluded to by Byron as the organ of the aristocracy and society. But a few yards from its office, and in the same year, 1772, the original Lyceum was built. All previous writers on the subject give 1765 as the date, and a certain James Paine (or Payne, as he is frequently spelt) is credited with the intention of having anticipated the Royal Academy of Arts by some three years. Oddly enough, the boot is on the other leg, so to speak. The charter of the Society of Artists of Great Britain was obtained in 1765, and, dissensions arising among the members of that body, there was a division. Hence, the establishment of the Royal Academy of Arts which came into existence with the delivery of the opening address by Sir Joshua Reynolds on February 2, 1769. This was at Somerset House, which was the home of the Royal Academy until 1838, its apartments being on the right of the Strand entrance. Until that time, the Society of Artists met in St. Martin's Lane—the Academy thereof was long famous for the exhibition of the works of the great artists.

The first Lyceum was designed by James Paine (1725–1789), the architect who was responsible for the bridges

over the Thames at Chertsey, Walton, Kew, and Richmond, and for many noble houses throughout the country and for some in London. The foundation stone of the new building was laid in 1771, as is proved by the following extract from the *Annual Register* for the year named, under the heading of July 23: "On Saturday last the president, directors, and fellows of the Society of



Roof of the First Lyceum, 1772.

Artists of Great Britain, assembled at the Crown and Anchor Tavern in the Strand, and proceeded from thence to the ground lately purchased by them in the Strand, where the first stone of the new Academy was laid by James Paine, Esq., president of the Society." The New Exhibition Room of the Royal Incorporated Society of Artists of Great Britain—in other words, the Lyceum—was opened on May 11, 1772, when an ode, written by

E. Lloyd, with music by W. Hook, was performed. Unfortunately, the prophecy contained in the last lines of this grandiloquent composition was not realised :

Behold ! the Arts around us bloom,
And this Muse-devoted Dome
Rival the works of Athens and of Rome.

The Crown and Anchor Tavern, whereat the "president, directors, and fellows" of the Society of Artists refreshed themselves prior to laying the foundation stone of the Lyceum, was one of the most noted of meeting-places west of Temple Bar. It stood on the south side of the Strand whence it was approached by a narrow court, between Arundel Street and Milford Lane, near to the Cheshire Cheese, which is still perpetuated in the latter thoroughfare. The last-named house is not to be confounded with the other tavern of the same name in Fleet Street, which is supposed to have been frequented by Dr. Johnson, although—strange omission!—it is not mentioned by Boswell. The Crown and Anchor, however, was certainly one of the haunts of Johnson and Boswell and of many of their associates. The tavern in which James Paine and his companion met on that eventful summer's day in 1771 was a very old building. It is mentioned by the historian, Strype, in 1729, when it was called the Crown, the Anchor being added to its name shortly afterwards, in honour of St. Clement's Church, hard by, the anchor being the emblem of its patron saint. During the reign of one of the early Georges, a picture of St. Cecilia, painted by one Kent, was presented to the church, but, as the picture contained, as it was thought, portraits which resembled the wife and children of the young Pretender, Bishop Gibson, a staunch adherent to the House of Hanover, ordered its

removal. It was accordingly taken, in 1725, across the way, to the Crown and Anchor, and here it was destroyed in a fire which burnt down the tavern in 1854. The Crown and Anchor of the latter period, however, was a comparatively modern erection, for the old house was pulled down and rebuilt in 1790. The Academy of Antient Music was instituted here in 1710, and, in 1780, it was the temporary headquarters of the Royal Society Club. It was here that Johnson quarrelled with Percy about Dr. Mounsey, and, on another occasion, when Sir Joshua Reynolds was upholding the advantages of wine as a factor in conversation, that Johnson exclaimed, "I have heard none of those drunken—nay, drunken is a coarse word—none of those *vinous flights*."

The academy did not prove a success—the opposition at Somerset House was too strong for a rival to compete against for long—and the room was purchased by a breeches-maker named Lingham, from the Strand, who let it to any one from whom he could obtain the rent. The first amusement exhibition held in the Lyceum was that given by "the noted Flockton," and consisted of a puppet-show and sleight-of-hand tricks. Flockton was, indeed, "noted," for he was the leading showman of his day. I have not discovered any of his Lyceum announcements, but here is one of his advertisements issued at Bartholomew Fair in 1789:—

"Mr. Flockton's Most Grand and Unparalleled Exhibition. Consisting, first, in the display of the Original and Universally admired Italian Fantoccini, exhibited in the same Skilful and Wonderful Manner, as well as Striking Imitations of Living Performers, as represented and exhibited before the Royal Family, and the most illustrious

Characters in this Kingdom. Mr. Flockton will display his inimitable Dexterity of Hand, Different from all pretenders to the said Art. To which will be perform'd an ingenious and Spirited opera called The Padlock. Principal vocal performers, Signor Giovanni Orsi and Signora Vidina. The whole to conclude with his grand and inimitable Musical Clock, at first view, a curious organ, exhibited three times before their Majesties." This curious musical clock contained no less than nine hundred figures working at various trades.

The Lyceum became an exchange in 1777, as witness the following advertisement which appeared early in that year: "The Directors and Managers give notice that the Grand Museum, or general Exchange of Arts and Sciences will open on the 21st of April instant, at this great room, lately belonging to the Royal Incorporated Society of Artists of Great Britain." Early in 1781—on April 28—a public debating society was opened "at the great room in the Strand, between Catherine Street and Exeter 'Change, late the Lyceum." Even in those remote days there was Lyceum Intelligence, and, under that heading, the *Gazetteer* published a description which gives a vivid word-picture of the large saloon, as it then appeared: "The room is fitted up with peculiar taste and elegance; and, like the House of Commons, on which it seems to be modelled, has a gallery for strangers, while the body of the room is appropriated solely for members who are subscribers to the institution. The gallery runs along each side of the room: and at each end forms a semi-circle, thereby corresponding with, and preserving, the form of the room. The front of the gallery is painted in a stile of neat and elegant simplicity; and from the top of each of the eighteen

pillars that support it, hangs a glass lustre, from which the room is illuminated. At the end of the room, opposite the entrance, stands a throne, with a canopy covered with green, fringed with gold ; with an elegant chair for the President : before the throne stand two chairs for the Secretary and Clerk, at the end of a long table covered with green cloth ; on which are laid pens, ink, and paper for the use of the members taking notes. The seats for the members are covered with green, ornamented with gilt nails, and raised one row above the other on matted platforms. In a word, the whole bears a striking resemblance to the House of Commons : with this difference that it is infinitely more elegant. As the Proprietors in fitting up their room had certainly in view the model of the lower House of Parliament ; so the forms of Parliament served them as models on which they grounded the matter of their proceedings in debate ; and if on Saturday night a stranger in the gallery could have fancied himself in St. Stephen's Chapel, everything that passed in the body of the House would have contributed to keep up the illusion. A question proposed and seconded—an amendment moved—debated—supported—combated—the question of the amendment put—a division—tellers appointed—the house told over—the numbers delivered in at the table by the tellers—the amendment rejected—and the main or original motion disposed of by a previous question. This regularity preserves decorum ; and promises that the Lyceum will be conspicuous for decency, order, and regularity.”

This debating society thus started seriously and well. One of its early subjects for discussion was this : “ Whether a fair representation of the people in Parliament would not be the best security of a virtuous administration against

evil advisers of the Crown?" Then there were debates on natural history, the Termites or White Ants attracting considerable attention. The School of Eloquence became rather frivolous when it started a discussion on morality: "Whether the fashionable infidelities of married couples are more owing to the depravity of the Gentlemen or the inconstancy of the Ladies?" was one of the questions for debate in 1782. And then the School of Eloquence announced that: "Young persons desirous of trying their abilities on the Stage will here find an opportunity much to their literary advantage; and Authors, who wish to essay their talents for Dramatic writing, will meet with due attention from the Proprietor of the Lyceum, whose intention is to instruct as well as delight." Ah me! those fatal words "instruct as well as delight" soon closed the School of Eloquence!

A novel and scientific exhibition was that of Count Zambeccari's Air Balloon, which was on view at the Lyceum in August, 1784, prior to its removal to the gardens of Chelsea Hospital. It was 102 feet in circumference, 33 feet in diameter, and it was computed to hold 18,200 cubic feet of "inflammable air." High prices were charged for admission—a guinea, half a guinea, and five shillings. "A majestic Diana in a car of gold, drawn by two beautiful reindeer," was not so exorbitant an attraction. This was in 1786. In the latter year, we find the Lyceum given up to a wax-work exhibition which was supposed to have come from Constantinople and to be "an exact Representation of the Seraglio, most curiously moulded in Wax, as large as nature, and taken from life by an eminent Artist, Mr. Silvestre, of the Royal Academy, at Paris. They consist of the grand Signior, and many

of the most beautiful Turkish and Armenian Ladies, all richly dressed, and after the newest and most resplendent taste of their respective countries ; as also the Empress of Germany, Empress of Russia, the French King and Queen, the Kings of Spain, Prussia, Portugal, and Naples, and the Stadtholder, with their respective Families, dressed in their national habit, in a most august and splendid manner, to the number of more than thirty royal personages.—A Sleeping Venus, of exquisite beauty.—A most beautiful Venus, in full length, being the exactest imitation of nature ever seen, and which has never appeared before.—Voltaire, that justly admired French genius, who died in Paris in the year 1778, aged 85, and has been in his life-time the intimate friend of Pope, Congreve, and Young. And many other figures which are too numerous to be minutely specified. The whole forms an exhibition which gratifies the artist as much as it pleases the curious inspector." The figures were on view from 10 a.m. until 9 p.m., and the charge for admission was one shilling.

A year later, that is, in 1787, the Lyceum had an Exhibition and Art sale of pictures by the Old Masters, the examples including "the celebrated Madonna and Child by Murillos from King Charles the First's collection," and works by Vandyke, Rembrandt, Teniers, Guido, and Hobbema. Sylvester—as he now spelt his name—was back with his waxworks in 1788, the persons figuring in it including Their Majesties King George III. and Queen Charlotte, the Prince of Wales, the Duke of York, and the Princes Royal, in a "family group at table." The Royal families of France and Spain were also shown, together with Voltaire, Franklin, and John Wesley. The latter was a favourite figure in the wax-work exhibitions of the period. In April,

MR. DILLER'S
GRAND EXHIBITION OF NEW-INVENTED
PHILOSOPHICAL FIREWORKS

FROM INFLAMMABLE AIR,

EXHIBITED ON *April 17th 1800*

MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, and FRIDAY EVENINGS,

AT THE LYCEUM, NEAR EXETER 'CHANGE, STRAND,

FROM EIGHT TO TEN O'CLOCK.

MR. DILLER,

PROFESSOR of Natural Philosophy from Holland, (who has the honour of a Pension from the King of France) begs leave to give the following Sketch of what is to be seen at his Exhibition:

A fixed Flower—a Sun turning round, varying in figure—a Star varying—a Triangle—a Dragon pursuing a Serpent—a Star of Knighthood—a Flame proper for Lighthouses, to the splendour and brilliancy of which, the rays of One Hundred Patent Lamps, collected in the same focus, would be much inferior.

A central Piece is exhibited on the Grand Apparatus, that undergoes 120 changes of figure, which it performs by a multitude of intersecting circles, each having a rotatory motion on its own axis. —To this are added Eight CADRILLES, consisting of 80 different Flames each, rose-coloured and green. The last display of this piece produces several thousand Flames, representing all Colours imaginable, and in the most strict symmetry, the whole without Smell, Smoke, or Gunpowder.

In the intervals of the Exhibition, the Saloon is lighted by an AEROSTATIC BRANCH, suspended from the Cupola of the Saloon, in which a light is produced in an instant of time, which the Operator varies at will, and extinguishes in an instant. —During these intervals,

MR. CARTWRIGHT

(Who has had the honour of instructing the QUEEN of FRANCE,)

Performs a very difficult and much-admired Selection of MUSIC, on his new-improved Set of

MUSICAL GLASSES.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT also attends, at the request of several Persons of Dillinction, to perform from Twelve to Three o'clock, every Day, at the LYCEUM, at 2s. 6d. each.

Mr. DILLER, the Inventor, in order to prevent mistakes, begs to inform the Public, that it is never intended to exhibit more than two-parts of the large Apparatus, on the same evening, as the Machinery, which must be stationary, and cannot be removed at will, remaining in view, might intimate the contrary, the Third being reserved to vary the ensuing Exhibition, the whole of which, being performed upon a most complicated Machinery, renders it wonderful, that the Intervals for charging the Reservoirs (which must not be done but on the occasion) are so short.

Admittance to the GRAND SALOON, 5s. — To the GALLERY, 3s. — Doors open at Seven, begins at Eight o'clock.

1788, the Lyceum had a curious entertainment in the shape of Philosophical Fireworks and the Musical Glasses. It was evidently extremely popular, as it was frequently repeated in succeeding years. I am fortunately enabled to give a facsimile of the original announcement.

In 1789, the landlord of the Robert Burns tavern, in the Strand, was arrested here, not for his temerity in giving imitations of a popular actor, but for debt. However, it is consoling to know that he was speedily bailed out, and it is to be hoped that he desisted from his "imitations." Shortly before this, there was an Aerostatic Exhibition, at sixpence per head, which was rendered particularly attractive by "Curious experiments made before the company with balloons filled with inflammable air." In the same year, melancholy was banished by "Collins' Evening Brush for rubbing off the rust of care," and a further temptation to the public was offered in the announcement: "excellent fires and the house lighted by wax." Then came Palmer's Lecture on Heads and Cartwright's Musical Glasses. The lecture was given by Robert Palmer, the brother of John Palmer (1747-1798), an actor of great refinement, whose Joseph Surface was an admirable performance. The lecture and music were supplemented by a real novelty in June, 1789. This was the display, during the intervals, of an "Aeropyric Branch," which illuminated the saloon. It was suspended from the cupola by a chain: "a light is produced in an instant, changes its colour, and is extinguished without any visible means whatever." This extraordinary effect was due to the new illuminant, gas. It was, however, the first use of gas in a public building, in England, and it antedated Winsor's lectures on gas—in the same place—by fifteen years.

The year 1789 was, indeed, memorable in the history of the first Lyceum. There were many other features in its round of attractions, in addition to those already mentioned. For instance, on April 13, there was "offered to the public" an entertainment called

THE DIVERSIONS OF AN EVENING.

In Four Parts, by

GEORGE SAVILLE CAREY

Who had the honour of repeating his System before Their Majesties at Windsor; being the LAST SEASON of his appearing in public.

In the course of the Evening will be introduced, Madame Mara and her Mouse; the African Slave's Appeal to Liberty; a Poetical, Tropical, and Whimsical Delineation of a Methodist Preacher; with a variety of THEATRICAL IMITATIONS, Vocal and Rhetorical, of many of the living Characters now on the Stage, and will endeavour to bring to mind those distinguished Worthies,

"Who were wont to keep the Table on a roar:"

Such as Garrick, Barry, Mossop, Woodward, Foote, Weston, Vernon, Henderson, &c.

The whole will be interspersed with a variety of Mr. Carey's favourite Songs; particularly the Disconsolate Sailor, the Loaves and the Fishes, the Little Blithsome Sparrow, and many other novelties, which will be expressed in the Handbills.

The Doors will be opened at half past Seven, and the Entertainment will begin at Eight o'clock.

Admittance to the Saloon 3s.—Gallery 2s.

This was by no means "the last season" of Carey's "appearing in public," as we shall note later on. In the meantime, let us see who this Carey was. His connection with the stage, and with one of the greatest luminaries thereof, is curious and interesting. "It is, perhaps, not generally known," says Macaulay, in writing of the death of the great Lord Halifax, in 1695, "that some adventurers who, without advantages or fortune or position, made themselves conspicuous by the mere force of ability, inherited the blood of

Halifax. He left a natural son, Henry Carey, whose dramas once drew crowded audiences to the theatres, and some of whose gay and spirited verses still live in the memory of hundreds of thousands. From Henry Carey descended that Edmund Kean, who, in our time, transformed himself so marvellously into Shylock, Iago, and Othello." The George Saville Carey, whose Lyceum advertisement I have quoted, was a posthumous son of Henry Carey, from whom he inherited much of his talent. "After declining to learn the mystery of printing," says Dr. Doran, "he tried that of playing; he produced little effect, but by singing, reciting, and above all, by his imitations; he lived a vagabond life, and managed to keep his head above water, with now and then a fearful dip into the mud below, for forty years; when, paralysis depriving him of the means to earn his bread, he contrived to escape further misery here by strangling himself. He was a man of great genius not unmixed with a tendency to insanity. He was cursed in one fair and worthless daughter, Nance Carey, whose intimacy with Aaron Kean—a tailor, or Edmund Kean, a builder, but, at all events, brother to Moses Kean, a tailor, and as admirable a mimic as George Carey himself—resulted in her becoming the mother of a boy, her pitiless neglect of whom seems to have begun even before his birth." This was Edmund Kean who, in the years to come, will be found playing his part in this history.

The Lyceum had become a landmark in London by now. In May, 1789, a picture exhibition was held in "the Apartments lately inhabited by Mrs. Nelson, No. 351, next to the Lyceum in the Strand." The advertisement had a note which ran: "Entrance either through the common passage of the Lyceum, or the shop of Mr. Homarth, furrier." In

June of this year, the bills were headed *As You Like It*. But this was not Shakespeare's comedy, be it noted. It was the title of the entertainment offered for the benefit of Robert Palmer. The spectators, be it observed, were presented with tea on this occasion. The "Theatrical and Senatorial Imitations" of "Mr. Kean" will also be noticed. This was the Moses Kean, of whom we have just heard. The bill is here given in full :—

For the BENEFIT of Mr. PALMER.

AS YOU LIKE IT.

The last Night but Two.

THIS PRESENT MONDAY, June 29, 1789,

A NEW ENTERTAINMENT

Is offered to the Public, and will be continued every Evening until the first of July, by

Mr. PALMER, of Drury-Lane Theatre, and
Mr. CARTWRIGHT, whose Performances on the Musical Glasses
has been honoured with such distinguished Patronage.

The PERFORMANCE

Will be in the GRAND SALOON of that Capacious and Elegant
Building, the LYCEUM, STRAND.

Mr. PALMER will deliver his Whimsical, Satirical, Serious, and
Comic OLIO, in Three Parts; in which he flatters himself there
will be something to please all palates.

The Performance shall have to recommend it, Variety and Novelty,
in the following Manner :

Part I.

AN OCCASIONAL ADDRESS.

(Written by Mr. BELLAMY.)

And various Comic Characters, from FOOTE.

(For the First Time), to conclude with

BRITISH LOYALTY; or, A SQUEEZE FOR ST. PAUL's.

Part II.

A Tragedy for Warm Weather, called

LINDAMIRA.

The Characters of the King, Confidante, Lindamira, and the Epilogue,
by Mr. PALMER; who will afterwards deliver a LECTURE on

ORATORY, in which will be introduced a Specimen of Scotch Elocution.

After which Mr. PALMER will present the Audience with Tea.
Mr. KEAN will give Theatrical and Senatorial IMITATIONS ; he will conclude with Luminaries of St. Stephen's Chapel, and the Heroes of the Sock and Buskin.

Part III.

In addition to what Mr. PALMER has already given, he will introduce Observations on the following Subjects :—Esteem, Friendship, Public Spirit, Generosity, Gratitude, Common Sense, and a Pin, (an elegant Morceau) and on the Heads of HECTOR and ACHILLES, contrasted with those of HUMPHREYS and MENDOZA.

To finish with the Character of a DRUNKEN BUCK.

Between each Part, Mr. CARTWRIGHT (who has had the honour of instructing the Queen of France) will perform on the much-admired Grand Set of MUSICAL GLASSES.

The whole to conclude with Mr. CARTWRIGHT's beautiful Display of PHILOSOPHICAL FIRE WORKS.

In addition to his former Display, he has just finished a Grand FIXED CENTRAL PIECE, which undergoes a number of Changes, in various Figures, and beautiful variation of Colours.

In the intervals, the Saloon is lighted by an Aeropyric Branch, suspended from the cupola by a chain ;—a light is produced in an instant, changes its colour, and is extinguished without any visible means whatever.

Doors to be opened at Half past Seven, and begin precisely at Eight o'Clock.

Boxes, 5s. Saloon, 3s. Gallery, 2s.

Places for the Boxes to be taken every day from Ten till Three, at the Lyceum, at the Lobby Door.

The miscellaneous character of the Lyceum entertainments was further exemplified in this notable year. There was an Irish giant of remarkable proportions indeed—according to the advertisement, which ran : “Mr. O'Brien, of the Kingdom of Ireland, indisputably the tallest man ever shown, is a lineal descendant of the old and puissant King Brian Boreau, and has, in person and appearance, all

the similitude of that great and grand potentate. The Gentleman alluded to measures eight feet four inches high. His family height is nine feet, which he hopes to attain by the time he is of age." In addition to the Irish Giant, there was Boxing in Mendoza's Academy, otherwise the Lyceum. The Gentle Art flourished between the hours



Polite Amusement or an Exhibition of Brute Beasts at the Lyceum.

of one and three o'clock, the prices of admission being one and sixpence to the boxes and a shilling to the gallery. The proprietor thought it necessary to make this statement in the public Press: "As Daniel Mendoza has divested his Exhibition of every degree of Brutality and rendered the Art of Boxing equally neat with Fencing, he thinks it necessary to mention that his Plan does not exclude the

Company of Ladies." Finally, for November of this year, we have a return visit of the "Royal Wax-Work, at the Lyceum, in the Strand." The enterprising Mr. Sylvester, "always anxious to gratify the Curiosity of a generous Public, has added to his grand Exhibition a Model of the Head of the late Governor of the Bastille. He received the exact likeness from the same Gentleman who sent him the likeness of Baron Trenck, who happened to be on the spot when the Governor was executed, and got permission of the mob to take it off in plaster, which Mask he sent to Mr. Sylvester. N.B. Mr. Sylvester returns his most grateful Thanks to the Nobility and Gentry, and Public in general, for the very great encouragement he has received ; and as he means to close his Exhibition very soon, admits Servants and Children at Half Price, viz., Sixpence only. That much admired Figure of the Sleeping Venus at Full Length."

In March, of the year following, Christies, of Pall Mall, announced the sale of the Lyceum by auction, giving its rent, including the vaults, at £250 per annum. The Grand Saloon was set down as measuring eighty feet by forty feet. I do not think that it changed hands, but it was in a parlous state in 1790. To be sure, the conjunctive efforts of George Saville Carey and Moses Kean were again called into play in April, but in August the attraction was "That most Wonderful of all Animals, which has so much engaged the attention of Naturalists for ages past, the Rhinoceros. This infant animal, only two years old, weighs near Twenty Hundred weight." The rest of the showman's announcement is as follows:—

From this specimen it evidently appears, the Rhinoceros is more compact in his formation, and stronger made than the Elephant, with

T O B E S E E N,

At the L Y C E U M,
In the S T R A N D:

10 June 1791

Just arrived

A most beautiful Zebra,

WHICH was bred in the Queen of Portugal's Menagerie at Lisbon; this curious Creature is remarkably striped with variegated colours, and is quite another variety to that which our Queen had about twenty-Years since. His Head resembles that of a fine Horse, his Body something like a Mule, but is a distinct Species of itself, different to either the Horse, Ass, or Mule, in short, the distinguished Works of the Creation are wonderfully displayed in the fine features, beauty and elegance of this extraordinary Animal. He is so gentle that Ladies and Children may stroke him with safety.

Admittance one Shilling each Person.

A L S O

THAT most W O N D E R F U L of all Animals which has so much engaged the Attention of Naturalists for Ages past,

The R H I N O C E R O S,

Who is more compact in his formation and stronger made than the ELEPHANT, and has an impenetrable COAT OF MAIL, a formidable HORN on his Nose and other singularities which have attracted the Observant, the Wise and the Great, Time immemorial, therefore in this enlightened Age, when the Works of the Great Creator, as to their Perfections and Variations, are so deservedly admired, it is presumed a sight of this formidable Beast in Armour, which forms so conspicuous a Link in Creation's Chain, will please every rational Beholder.

Admittance One Shilling.

And last, though not the least, is

A Stupendous O S T R I C H,

Lately arrived from the Coast of Barbary

" Whose like, Earth bears not on her spacious Face,

" Alone in Nature stand the Wonderous Race,"

This Bird exceeds in magnitude and texture of Plumage all the feather'd Tribe in the whole Creation, it measures near nine Feet high, although but a young One,

Admittance only six-Pence each Person.

superior strength, an impenetrable coat of mail, a formidable horn on his nose, and an imperious spirit; he bids defiance to the whole Brute creation; he is not violent except when irritated or discomposed for want of food.

This Natural Curiosity was a present from an Eastern Nabob to a great personage in India.

The singularities of this prodigy have attracted the observant, the wise, and the great, time immemorial: therefore in this enlightened age, when the works of the Great Creator, as to their perfections and variations, are so deservedly admired, it is presumed a sight of this formidable beast in armour, which forms so conspicuous a link in Creation's chain, will please every rational beholder.

Admittance One Shilling.

In the following year, as will be seen from the facsimile of the bill on the preceding page, the Rhinoceros was reinforced by "a most beautiful Zebra" and "a stupendous Ostrich." The Lyceum also rejoiced in some dwarfs—"Lilliputians Alive"—a bay colt, a heifer with two heads, and a "wonderful American Elk." It is not surprising that a contemporary chronicler was moved to remark that "Such prodigies in nature make the Lyceum a place of the first resort for every admirer of the wonderful works of the Creation."

CHAPTER II

1790-1818

Dibdin at the Lyceum, 1790—Equestrian performances—A sale-room for unredeemed pledges—Stevens' Olio—Dr. Arnold takes the Lyceum—He forfeits his lease—R. K. Porter and his panoramas—Winsor's lectures on gas—Leigh Hunt at the Lyceum—The Tussaud Exhibition—A French Drummer and the Female Hussar—The Lyceum becomes a regular theatre and the Drury Lane company appears here, 1809—Miss Kelly—Tom Moore's M.P.—Shakespeare at the Lyceum—The new Lyceum opened, 1816—Its illumination by gas—The Gathering of the Clans.

HAPPILY, the wild beasts were not allowed to monopolise the Lyceum in 1790. In the autumn, Charles Dibdin (1745-1814), the famous song-writer, came to the rescue, and with such success that he gave his entertainment for one hundred and eight nights. I am able to give a copy of his preliminary advertisement:

MR. DIBDIN'S NEW ENTERTAINMENT.

MR. DIBDIN having been most warmly and earnestly solicited, not to delay his Entertainment so long as the 1st of November, respectfully announces, that in compliance with so many flattering and expected applications, he shall open the LYCEUM in the Strand, on MONDAY, the 18th of October, which place will be very handsomely decorated for that purpose, with an amusement entirely new, in which he will introduce Twenty-three Songs, perfectly original.

The patronage, under the auspices of which Mr. Dibdin has now the honour to come forward, is so complete and distinguished, that it

would be unpardonable in him not to manifest his gratitude, by every attention in his power; he therefore, with all deference and respect, informs his Patrons and his Friends, that he shall send them cards, expressing the title of his amusement. A list of the songs, as they will be successively performed, and every other necessary particular.

Mr. Dibdin's last publication of *Sly Old Hodge*, together with *The Greenwich Pensioner*, *The Lamplighter*, *The Flowing Can*, *Taffy and Griddy*, *The Indian Song*, *The Irish Drinking Song*, *Peggy Perkins*, *Batchelor's Hall*, *Saturday Night at Sea*, *The Mock Italian Song*, *The Tar for all weathers*, *Gratitude*, inscribed to Lord Galway, *Ben Backstay*, *Poor Tom*, *All the World's a Masquerade*, *Every Inch a Sailor*, the *Selected Songs*, and the *By-Stander*, all of which publications have a most rapid sale, which, as well as several *Piano Fortes*, may be had at Mr. Dibdin's Warehouse, No. 411, Strand, opposite the Adelphi.

On the date in question—October 18, 1790—there was accordingly given at the Lyceum—which had been handsomely decorated for the season—"an entirely new, and perfectly original Entertainment, in Three Parts, with an Exordium," called

THE WAGS;

OR, THE CAMP OF PLEASURE.

The whole Written, and Composed, and will be Spoken, Sung and accompanied by

MR. DIBDIN.

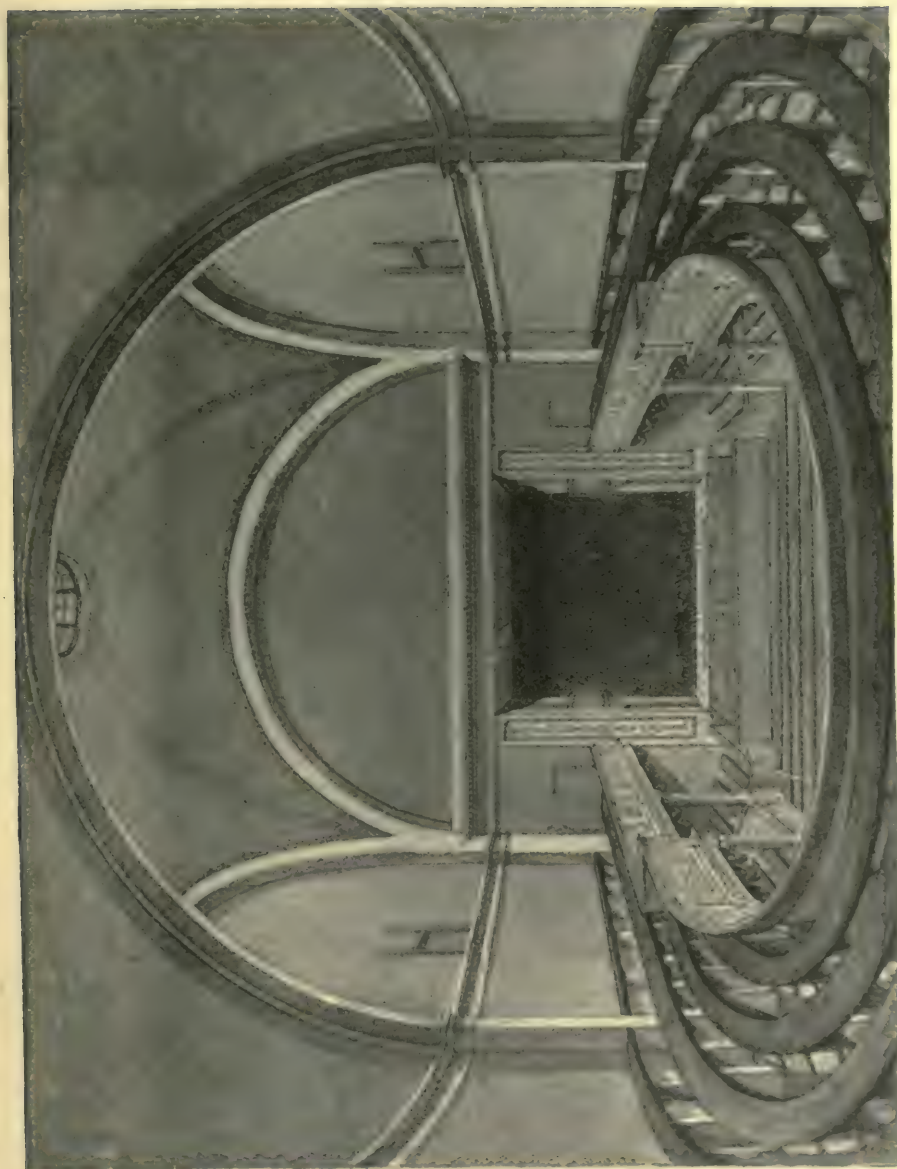
Among a variety of other characters will be pourtrayed, A Half-pay Brigadier, a Yellow Admiral, a Shatterbrain Irishman, a Traveller, a Musical Amateur, a Dealer in Mysteries, a Physiognomist, a Jester a Boxer, a Dustman, and a Negro.

The Songs will come in the following succession :

In the Exordium, *The Camp of Pleasure*. Part I. *Death or Victory*. *The Joys of the Country*, *Morality in the Foretop*, *An Indian Death Song*, *Happy Jerry*, *The Family Likeness*, and an *Irish Italian Song*.

Part II. *Jack in his Element*, *The Soldier's Adieu*, *The Pleasures of the Chase*, *The Virtue of Drunkenness*, *A Savage Love Song*, *Sound Argument*, *The Watery Grave*, and *Peace and War*.

Part III. *Patrick O'Row*, *The Negro and his Banjer*, *Nautical*



Interior of the Lyceum in 1790.

Philosophy, Hey fellow well met, The Dustman, A Drop of the Creature, and the Finale.

The Doors will be opened at Seven o'Clock, and the performance begin exactly at Eight.

Boxes 5s.—Saloon 3s.—Gallery 2s.

Places for the boxes may be taken at Mr. DIBDIN'S Warehouse, No. 411, Strand, opposite the Adelphi, where may be had all Mr. DIBDIN'S works.

Many of the New Songs are already preparing for publication.

. Silver Tickets for the Season may be had as above.

This Entertainment will be continued every Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.

From a contemporary Press notice I gather that "The DUKE OF NORFOLK, LORD GALWAY, COL. PHIPPS, &c., &c., are among those who are constantly crowding for seats, which, from the very great overflow, they have found difficult to obtain." The entertainment was so successful that Dibdin repeated it during successive seasons at the Lyceum, especially in 1792. In the latter year the Philosophical Fireworks and the Musical Glasses were again in evidence, and there was a repetition of Collins and his Evening Brush.

When the first Amphitheatre in Westminster Bridge Road was burnt down, in 1794, Philip Astley, the soldier showman, transferred his circus to the Lyceum, or, as I take it, part of it, for the building could not have accommodated the entire show. Astley was followed at the Lyceum by another circus company, that of B. Handy. His "inimitable troop at the New Circus, Lyceum, Strand," was deemed a worthy successor to Astley's. In connection with these equestrian performances, a curious halfpenny copper token was issued. On one side was a figure of Mercury on a bare-backed horse in full gallop, encircled by the words, "The first equestrian performance in Europe.

Lyceum, Strand, London"; on the other, the design was a table with a man standing on his head on the point of a sword inscribed "Singing, Dancing, Tumbling, Slack Wire. Every Evening." The token was redeemable in London, Bath, or Manchester.

The Lyceum again fell upon evil days. Soon after its circus year, it became a sale room in the occupation of one Mr. Crook who, on a certain Thursday, at twelve o'clock, offered, "at his spacious Rooms, the Lyceum, No. 350, Strand,"—"A Valuable Collection of Unredeemed Pledges." Alas, what a falling off was there! In 1798, an Astromomical Lecture, with the marvellous title of Diostrodoxon, was given. Fortunately, the century was not destined to end in gloom. In the summer of 1799, a good class of entertainment was given, and, I gather, with a fair amount of success. "An attempt will be made,"—so ran the announcement—"at the

RESTORATION

Of plain Old English Humour, Sense, and Satire, from the peculiar and last production of the celebrated

GEORGE ALEXANDER STEVENS,

(Never published) being a Comic Olio, adapted to the Times, called
A CABINET OF FANCY,

Which will be exemplified in an Original Collection of Transparent Paintings, Sketches, and Designs, as they were represented at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket.

A PREFATORY EXORDIUM will be Spoken, and the whole of the
Lecture given,

By Mr. WILKS,

Of the Theatres Royal, Dublin, &c., &c.

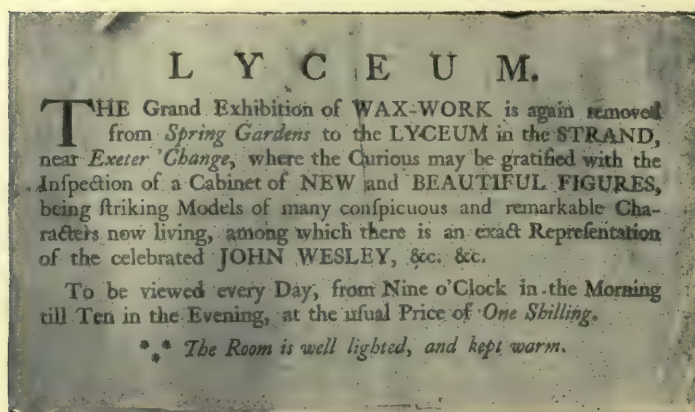
The LECTURE will be divided into Three Parts, in the course of each the following Characters will be pourtrayed, with Comic and Suitable Explanations:

In the First Part the following Transparencies: Fancy—A Connoisseur—Seeing the World—Having seen the World—Globe of

London—Full Purse—Empty Purse—Grub-street Writer—Lanthon of Diogenes—Orpheus (Recitative and Air)—The Graces—System of Pythagoras—And a Design from a Dancing School.

Transparencies in the Second Part: Hope—Brushwood—Party Opposition—Honey Moon—Physical Portraits—Quacks—Old Batchelors and Old Maids—Married Philosopher—Fame and Scandal—Wishing Cap—Lady Hottentot—Shoe Boy. (Song.)

Transparencies in the Third Part: Brazen Head—Decius—Peter Pimple—Terence Flarty O'Rourke. (Song.)—Lady Dowlas—Sir Finikin Noodletop—Antiquarians—Snowdrop—Shakespear—Garrick.



As Music cannot be granted for this Exhibition without rendering it a Theatrical Performance, it is humbly hoped the indulgence of the spectators will dispense with the omission.

Admittance to the Boxes 3s. Pit 2s. Gallery 1s. 6d. Upper Gallery 1s.

Tickets to be had, and Places taken for the Boxes, at the Lyceum, from Eleven o'Clock till Three every day.

Doors to be opened at a Quarter past Seven, and begin precisely at Eight o'Clock.

The way to the Pit and Boxes is from the front door, Lyceum, Strand. To the Galleries, from Exeter-street, Catherine-street.

the change in the character of the entertainment to which I have just alluded. That remarkable man, Robert Ker Porter (1777-1842), who achieved distinction in arts, diplomacy, war, and literature—he was the brother of the novelists, Jane and Maria Porter—exhibited at the Lyceum the first of his great panoramas, *The Storming of Seringapatam*. It was mounted on rollers, and was 120 feet long. It was followed by similar large paintings representing the Siege of Acre, and the battles of Lodi, of Alexandria, and of Agincourt. In 1801, there was an Optical and Mechanical Exhibition at the Lyceum entitled *Phantasmagoria*; a similar entertainment was given in 1808.

Gas, as we have already seen, had been introduced into the Lyceum, by way of entertainment, in 1789. An important advance in the history of “the new light,” as it was then called, took place in September, 1804, when Frederick Albert Winsor (1763-1830) gave his lectures at the Lyceum. His observations were illustrated by means of “a chandelier in the form of a long, flexible tube suspended from the ceiling, communicating at the end with a burner, designed with much taste, being a cupid grasping a torch with one hand and holding the tube with the other.” It was not until 1807 that gas was used in a London street. In that year, Winsor lit up part of Pall Mall with it, but, although the experiment was considered a success, it met with little encouragement, and gas was not in general use in the London streets until 1812.

Among the entertainments offered at the Lyceum in 1800-1 was Lonsdale's “*Ægyptiana*,” which included paintings by Porter, Pugh, Cristall, and others; they were accompanied by readings which embraced selections from

L'Allegro. Leigh Hunt, when a boy, was taken to one of these exhibitions. "We recollect," he says, "being so early one morning, that we had the place to ourselves. The room was without a sound, and the scene Florence; and when we came out, the noise and crowd of the streets had an



effect on us as if we had been suddenly transported out of an Italian solitude."

Here was the first London home of the Tussaud Exhibition, which was opened in Paris in 1780. Madame Tussaud, who was born at Berne in 1760, was in Paris during the Revolution and modelled the heads of many of the celebrated and notorious persons of that terrible epoch.

Her Exhibition was shown in London, at the Lyceum, in 1802. Madame Tussaud lived to see her wax-work figures develop into one of the institutions of the capital, for she did not die until 1850. "The Remarkable French Drummer," as he was called, a man who played on seven drums, exhibited here in the same year of Madame Tussaud's first London show. In 1805, the Lyceum was called the Loyal Theatre of Mirth, and put forward a Grand Spectacle called The Female Hussar.

The history of the Lyceum as a regular theatre dates from the early part of the year 1809. On February 24, the third Drury Lane Theatre Royal was destroyed by fire. This left the large company stranded for want of a home. The Lyceum was immediately thought of, and here the burnt-out actors found a temporary shelter until their new theatre—the present Drury Lane—was ready in 1812. The opening bill is somewhat curious. It is headed, Drury Lane Company, and then proceeds :

By permission and under the sanction of the Right Honourable the
LORD CHAMBERLAIN.

THE LYCEUM THEATRE, STRAND.

This present Thursday, April 20, 1809,

With the Consent and Approbation of

THE PROPRIETORS OF THE LATE THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE
Their Majesties' Servants will perform the comedy of
THE HEIR AT LAW.

Other plays, in addition to Colman's comedy, performed during the Drury Lane company's first season at the Lyceum, included that gloomy drama, *The Stranger*, and Mrs. Centlivre's comedy, *The Wonder*, and lesser pieces such as *Grieving's a Folly* and *No Song No Supper*. The company included the elder Mathews, Robert William

Elliston, W. Dowton, Jack Bannister, Wrench, Mrs. Glover, and a young actress who was subsequently associated for many seasons with the Lyceum, Frances Maria Kelly. It will be observed that the bill thus quoted was very precise in its mention of "the permission and sanction" of the Lord Chamberlain and a trifle obsequious in regard to "the consent and approbation" of the proprietors of the defunct Drury Lane Theatre. This was simply because the cormorant proprietors of the patents—in other words, licenses—of the big houses, Drury Lane and Covent Garden, used all their influence to prevent smaller theatres from playing Shakespeare and other classical dramas. This restriction was in force until 1843, when all theatres were free to perform any piece whatever, provided, of course, that the play itself had been licensed by the Lord Chamberlain. Moreover, the minor theatres were nearly crushed out of existence by another difficulty which beset them. They were only allowed to be open during the summer months, in short, while their powerful rivals were closed. So that when, in 1809, Samuel James Arnold, son of Dr. Arnold, applied for a license for the Lyceum, it was only granted to him from June 3 to October 3, and then only for musical works of a light order. Nay, more, the very name of the theatre was changed to that of the English Opera House. Arnold, however, had some sort of compensation for a time, inasmuch as he received £900 a year and a third of the profits during the three seasons that the Drury Lane company appeared at the Lyceum; and, when the new Drury Lane house was built, Arnold was made its director by the committee, which included the Earls of Dudley and Essex and Lord Byron.

Until the year 1816, there is but little of moment to

record. In the summer of 1810, ballad operas, burlettas, and other musical pieces were given. One of these was *The Cabinet*, in which John Braham, Wm. Oxberry, Dowton, Mrs. Orger, and Miss Kelly appeared. In May, Mathews acted Lord Ogleby in *The Clandestine Marriage*, for his benefit; and in June, a new opera called *Oh this*



Pantomime at the Lyceum in 1812.

Love or the Masqueraders, was witnessed by the Princess of Wales, the Earl and Countess of Grey and Lord Dering, events in the social world which were duly chronicled in the fashionable intelligence of the day. *The Honeymoon*, *The Hypocrite*, *John Bull*, and *George Barnwell* were among the prominent plays of 1810, and Mathews was received with great favour in *Hit or Miss*. A year

later, the introduction of horses on the stage of Covent Garden was burlesqued in *The Quadrupeds*, and in the same year an operatic romance, in three acts, which once enjoyed enormous prosperity, was produced. The work of "Monk" Lewis, it bore the fearsome title of *One o'Clock or the Knight and the Wood Dæmon*. In 1811, there was also witnessed Tom Moore's single stage work, *M.P.*, or the *Blue Stocking*, a comic opera in three acts. Shakespeare was represented in 1811 by *Much Ado About Nothing* and *As You Like It*, for benefit performances.

The pieces presented at this time also included Dr. Arnold's *Castle of Andalusia*, Moore's *M.P.*, an "operatic anecdote" called *Frederick the Great*, Dibdin's "comick extravaganza," *Harlequin Hoax*, the *Maid and the Magpie* (which made a great hit in consequence of the similarity of the story to that of some dramatic events in real life), and the comic operas of *The King's Proxy* and *The Duenna*. The latter piece was extremely popular. James Wallack, a valued member of the company, gave imitations of the great actors, for his benefit; and in 1815, John Pritt Harley, one of the best of Shakespearean clowns, made so successful a first appearance in London that he was promptly snapped up by Drury Lane to take the place left vacant through Bannister's retirement. It is interesting to note that there was so much uncertainty as to the exact name of the establishment at this period that, on August 3, 1815, it was called the Theatre Royal, Lyceum, and, on the following night, the Theatre Royal English Opera.

In this year, also, Arnold obtained a ninety-nine years' lease of the Strand property at a ground rent of £800 per annum. He acquired some of the adjoining house property and the first really substantial theatrical building on this

NEW OPERA and PANTOMIME.
THEATRE ROYAL, LYCEUM.
 This present **THURSDAY, August 6, 1812.**
 Will be performed, to the 14th time, a NEW COMIC OPERA in Three Acts called
RICH AND POOR,
 The OVERTURE and MUSIC composed and selected by Mr. JOHNSON.
 The Principal Characters by—Mr. FAWCETT,
 Mr. PYNE, Mr. HORN, Mr. OXBERRY, Mr. KNIGHT,
 Mr. PENSON, Mr. PENLEY, Mr. FISHER, Mr. WEWITZER,
 Mrs. ORGER, Mrs. GRIGLIETTI, Miss KELLY,
 Mrs. HARLOWE, Mrs. BLAND, Miss JONES,
 The Opera of **RICH and POOR** is published, and may be had of the Theatre,
 or of Sherwood, Neeley and Jones, Stationers Row.
 The MUSIC is also published and may be had of J. POWER, 26 Strand.
 After which will be performed, for the 7th time, a new Splendid Harlequinade, which has been in
 preparation previous to the Summer Season, called.

Jack and Jill;
OR, THE CLOWN'S DISASTERS.

Invented and produced under the direction of Mr. KIRBY.
 With entirely new Scenery, Machinery, Dresses and Decorations.
 The Overture and Music entirely new, composed by Mr. George W. KERVE.
CHARACTERS Jack, (afterwards Harlequin) Mr. HOLLINGSWORTH,
 Watty Wildgoose, (Squire to Jill, afterwards Lover) Mr. WEST,
 Watty's Guardian, (afterwards Pantaloon) Mr. MALE,
 Watty's Lacquey, (afterwards Clown) Mr. KIRBY,
 Old Dame Gill, the reputed Grandmother to Jill, (afterwards the Goddess Fortune)
 Miss F. BOLTON, And Jill, (afterwards Columbine) Miss VALANCEY,
 Owner of Waste Ground, Mr. BUXTON, China Man, Mr. FRANKLIN,
 Cheese Monger Mr. APPELBY, Mr. Sweet, (the Grocer) Mr. COST,
 Pastrycook, Master SEYMOUR, Organ Man, Mr. REECE,
 Showman, (of a Now-descript) Mr. JAMIESON,
 The Now-descript, Master F. PARSLÖE,
 Sailor, Mr. LEE, Soldier, Mr. MADDOCKS,
 Hero, Mr. MILLER, Alderman, Mr. JONES,
 Millers, Messrs. Buxton, Mathews, Hope, Cost, Appleby,
 Thrashers, Messrs. West, Chappel, Jamieson,
 Crab, Master C. PARSLÖE, Batch, the Baker, Mr. FRANKLIN,
 Grasshopper, Master L. PARSLÖE, Fishmonger, Mr. APPELBY,
 Trapezepeople, Messrs. Meads, Jones, Minton, I. Boyce, Carlyle, &c. &c.
 Watchmen, Messrs. West, Reece, Perkins, &c. &c. &c.

In the course of the Pantomime, the following New and Splendid Scenes will be exhibited.

1. Outside of Dymie Gill's Cottage, and distant Village by Sunset. 2. Interior of the Cottage, changes to 3. The Abode of the Goddess Fortune, with her Cornucopia, which changes again to 4. The Interior of the Cottage. 5. A piece of Waste Land, with a grand Mechan- ical change to 6. Harlequin's Villa. 7. A fauciful Oasis, which the Clown is elevated on a point of real Water. And to conclude with (16) a splendid Seras, representing:	8. Outside of Harlequin's Villa, turned topsy- turvy. 9. Grocer's Shop. 10. A Corn-field, with a Stack of Wheat, which changes to 11. A Wind Mill, afterwards to 12. Pastry-Cook and Baker's Shop. 13. A Fishmonger's Shop. 14. Road-side, and Pot-house by a Brick-field,— a Storm, with Clown's ascent into the air. 15. Bell Room in the Pot-house, Clown's descent.
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THE ABODE OF FORTUNE in the REALMS of RICHES.
 The SCENERY and MACHINERY designed by Mr. MORRIS,
 and executed by him, Mr. UNDERWOOD, and numerous Assistants.
 The DRESSES by Mr. BANKS, Mr. ROBINSON, &c.
 The DANCES by Mr. HOLLINGSWORTH.
 The Banks of the Pantomime may be had in the Theatre.

site was that now erected, at a cost of £80,000. The first stone of the auditorium of the new theatre was laid in January, 1816, "after a suitable speech, by Mrs. Arnold, wife of Mr. Arnold, the proprietor—the rest of the walls being previously laid to the height of the roof in the short space of seven weeks, the speedy completion of the building is evident. Corn, wine, and oil, each the pro-



Interior of the Lyceum, 1816-1828.

duction of British soil and manufacture, were poured on the stone, as typical of the appropriation of the structure to the culture of native genius."

— The Lyceum "New Theatre" was opened on June 17, 1816, with Arnold's opera, *Up All Night*, the opening address being spoken by Miss Kelly. The following extract from a candid criticism of the performance is an amusing example of the outspoken censure which was indulged in at the time: "It remains that we should say a

word or two of the performance in which Mr. Bartley, stage-manager of the concern, appeared as Admiral Blunt. It ought to have been recollected that the Admiral has some songs to encounter, and that Mr. Bartley had laid in among his sea-stock but a very short allowance of voice—and of musical ear a still more scanty provision. The consequence was that the solo character of the songs was spoiled—that the harmonies, where he had to sing in concert, were ruined—and that Mr. Bartley, in many respects an entertaining and always a respectable actor, was treated with serious marks of ill-humour by the audience.”

Here is a description of the theatre as it existed from its opening in 1816 until its destruction by fire in 1830: “The front is in a line with the houses on the north side of the Strand. It has a stone portico, supported by eight Ionic columns, between which”—in 1825—were “suspended large gas lanterns. The columns are connected by an inclosure of fancy iron-work, and support a stone balcony, with rounded balustrades; in the centre of which is a large square tablet, in which is engraved the word ‘Lyceum’ Above this, are three tiers of windows (three in a tier) surmounted by a neat pediment; and the second and third tiers are divided by bands, on the upper of which appears ‘Theatre Royal’ and on the lower ‘Lyceum Tavern.’ The lower part of the building, under the portico, contains two admission doors to the boxes and pit, and one window. The entrances to the two galleries, and another to the pit, are in a court communicating with the Strand and with Exeter Street; and in the latter street is the stage-door. A long passage and a staircase lead to the boxes, whence there is an entrance to a long room, called The

Shrubbery, from a large quantity of green and flowering shrubs being placed in the centre and corners of the room, rising pyramidically to the ceiling." There were two



Box Entrance (in the Strand), 1825.

tiers of twenty boxes each, as well as four "pigeon-holes"—small boxes—on each side of the proscenium. The auditorium was in the form of a lyre, and the distance from the orchestra to the centre of the first circle was

thirty feet. A feature of the building, which survived from the original Lyceum, of which indeed, it was the main part, was the principal Saloon. This was 72 feet in length and 40 feet wide. It was commonly known as The Shubbery. In addition, there was, on the second circle level, a Music Saloon, 42 feet in length and 21 feet wide. In 1825, it was computed that the house "when full" would



A Ticket designed by Bartolozzi.

hold £350. I fear that such a happy event was extremely rare. In 1817, for instance, affairs were in so poor a condition that two shows a night, lasting from 6 until 9 o'clock, and from 9.30 until midnight, were given. The result, however, was not such as to justify the continuation of the experiment for long.

A rather curious announcement appeared in 1816, on an occasion when Miss Kelly, as Polly Peachum in The

Beggar's Opera, was a chief attraction. It alluded to the puff preliminary, a practice which is still in favour, in one form or another, with theatrical managers. "The Publick," so ran the notice at the foot of the bill of the Play, "are requested to observe that, in the future Management of this Theatre, it is proposed to abstain from the Custom which has of late years prevailed, of enlarging at the Bottom of the Play-Bills, on the success of Performers and Performances, which has been by many considered as an Attempt to direct, and sometimes to mislead, the Judgment."



Leigh Hunt.

(He visited the Lyceum before it became a theatre.)

In February, 1817—
during the winter, be it remembered, theatrical performances were forbidden to take place at the Lyceum—there was a fancy dress ball. I quote the interesting advertisement:

NEW THEATRE ROYAL, ENGLISH OPERA HOUSE.—On Monday, the 17th instant, at this Theatre, and in the spacious Buildings attached to it, will be given A GRAND VENETIAN FESTIVAL AND MASQUED BALL.—On this occasion the Pit will be entirely floored over, and, with the whole Stage (which is the largest in England), will be converted into an extensive Parterre, capable of containing from five to six thousand persons. This area will be appropriated to Reels and Country Dances. The whole will

be fancifully interspersed with Italian Cottages and Boutiques 'des Confitiers, for the service of Refreshments to the Company; and, with other Picturesque Devices, will be brilliantly Illuminated with variegated Lamps, and otherwise tastefully decorated.—In the New Saloon or Coffee Room, a Band will be stationed expressly for Quadrilles and other fancy Dances.—The Great Room, called the Lyceum, originally constructed for the Society of Arts, and now attached to the Theatre (and which is capable of containing from two to three thousand persons), having been newly fitted up, will be opened for the first time as a Principal Supper Room; and a number of smaller Apartments adapted to the accommodation of Parties of from ten to thirty persons, may be secured by an early application at the Box Office of the Theatre, at the Strand Entrance.—The Nobility and Gentry who propose to honour the Ball with their presence, and who have not already expressed their intention to patronize it, are respectfully requested to observe, that in order to insure a select company no Tickets will be issued but through the parties with whom the entertainment has originated, or from the Box Office, Strand Entrance, where application must be made, with the names and addresses of those desirous of obtaining them, the day previous to their delivery, and that no Ticket will be transferable.—To prevent improper intrusion, and to guard against the possibility of forgery, every Ticket will be stamped with the Government Stamp.—Gentlemen's Tickets £1 11s. 6d. Ladies' £1 1s. 0d.—Supper Tickets, including Wines, optional, 10s. 6d. each.

In the following month, an entertainment, which became a great attraction at the Lyceum, was given. This was Walker's Eidouranian, a scientific and astronomical lecture. The theatre was "now warmed by a stove under the Pit, and several other Fires"—rather a dangerous mode of combating the rigours of our climate.

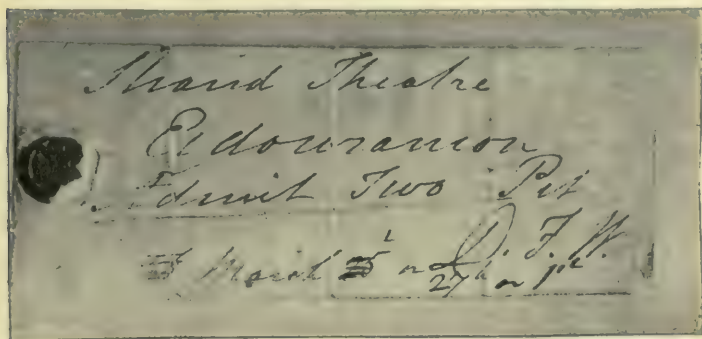
For the opening of the regular season of 1817, "embellishment and improvements" were made in the theatre, and The Election, a musical drama "adapted from a comedy" by Joanna Baillie, was produced without effect. There was "mettle more attractive," however, in a spectacular piece called Don Juan, the principal ingredients

of which consisted of A Sea Story, a Ship on Fire, a Grand Banquet, the Interior of a Charnel House, and an Awful Representation of

Pandemonium,
The Fiery Abyss of the Infernal Regions
with
A Shower of Real Fire.

But even Don Juan had to admit the public at half-price—at nine o'clock—"for the first time this season."

This year was also notable in the history of the Lyceum inasmuch as gas, as an illuminating power, was freely intro-



A Pass to the Eidouranian Lecture at the Lyceum, 1817.
(The black patch on the left is Walker's seal.)

duced into the theatre. As has been previously observed, gas, under the guise of the Aeropyric Branch, had been used in 1789 at the Lyceum, and, fifteen years later, Winsor gave his lectures here. On August 6, 1817, the bills of the Lyceum proclaimed that, "The Gas Lights will this evening be introduced over the whole Stage," and, two days later, that this was an accomplished fact. On September

8, in consequence of the success of the novel experiment, the following manifesto was issued : " The complete Success



THE PROSCENIUM OF THE ENGLISH OPERA HOUSE (THE LYCEUM),
as it appeared on March 21, 1817,
with Walker's Exhibition, the
Eidouranian.

which, after a Trial of several Weeks, has attended the experiment of lighting the Stage by Gas, has induced the Proprietor of this Theatre still further to consult the

Improvement of the Publick Accommodation ; and, this Evening, a new and brilliant Mode of illuminating the

AUDIENCE PART OF THE THEATRE.

by means of Gas Lights, will be submitted to the Observation, and, it is respectfully hoped, to the Approbation of the Visitors of the English Opera House." On the same evening, the Italian Terrace—in other words, the large saloon—was decorated with "a great variety of Fresh Trees, Shrubs, and Flowers."

But alas for the precarious nature of theatrical management ! Even the Gas and the Shrubbery, and two performances a night at cheap prices, resulted in wretched business. So that, when Bartley took his benefit, two days after the previous announcement, he was forced to try one *Mdlle. Saqui* on *La Corde Roide* as an inducement to the fickle public to part with a small portion of its money. The actor, in an open address, commented upon "the depressed state of all Theatrical property, and the obvious decline of Publick interest in the once favourite Amusements of the Drama." Even then one finds a complaint regarding "the early hour of commencing" and "the late hour of dining." Ah ! that late dinner hour ! It has often been the excuse for want of patronage of a bad entertainment. In 1818, the second of the nightly bills began at 9.30, so that "the late hour of dining" was a rather far-fetched invention in Bartley's time.

— The Lyceum, after being closed for the winter, made a fitful re-opening on February 10, 1818, "under the express patronage of His Royal Highness, the Duke of Sussex,

and several Highland noblemen," the occasion being a great

GATHERING OF THE CLANS.

The programme embraced Highland Dances and Reels, Jigs, an Ancient Dirk Dance, an exhibition of Broad Sword Playing, a Strathspey Dance, Scottish Melodies on the Union Pipes, a representation of a Highland Wedding, and—a special feature—the Reel of Tulloch. Many of these items were billed in Gaelic, but, mercifully for the benighted English, translations were thoughtfully provided, otherwise there might have been trouble concerning *Leann na Drochaid*. The London Scots attended the Gathering of the Clans in full force and brought their English friends in large numbers, for this bill was repeated at fairly frequent intervals.

CHAPTER III

1818-1830

Charles Mathews' First At Home—Washington Irving and Thomas Moore visit the Lyceum—American Indians and an Automatic Trumpeter—The Vampire—" Dicky " Peake—Rivalry with Drury Lane—Fancy Dress Balls—A female Hamlet—Edmund Kean present—The theatres opened free on Coronation Day, July 19, 1821—Der Freischütz—Napoleon's Tambour Major—Dryden, Purcell, Molière, and Beaumarchais—Edmund Kean acts at the Lyceum—Charles Kemble and the Covent Garden company—Destruction of the Lyceum—Memoir of Miss Kelly

A CHAPTER of particular interest in the history of the theatre began on April 2 of the last-mentioned year, 1818, when Mathews gave his initial At Home here. This was Mathews' "first attempt to face the town single-handed," and the prelude to a much-needed success. The original announcement was as follows :—

The Publick
are respectfully informed that
Mr. Mathews
will be
At Home
at the
Theatre Royal
English Opera House

On Thursday next,
the 2nd of April, 1818,
and on the
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday,
and Saturday following,
when he will have the honour of presenting his visitors
with an Entertainment called
Mail Coach Adventures.

Public expectation was strongly excited by the
announcement of a performer attempting to amuse the



Mathews the Elder as the Scotch Woman.

town by his single effort. The house was filled at an early
hour, and it was observed that there was only one musician,
who played the overture on a pianoforte at the side of the
stage. The preparations for the entertainment were
exceedingly simple. They merely consisted of a drawing-

room scene, the "properties" being only a small table, covered with a green cloth, a lamp at either end of it, and a chair behind it. Without any other appliances or external means of creating effect, the performer came forward in evening dress, just as he would have done at an ordinary evening party. The following is a copy of the bill of this interesting entertainment :—

MAIL COACH ADVENTURES.

Affording an introduction for various comic songs, imitations, etc. Previous to which Mr. Mathews will address the company on the subject of the present attempt.

PART FIRST.

Recitation—Introductory Address—General improvement in the conveyance of live lumber, as exemplified in the progress of heavy coach, light coach, caterpillar, and snail—Whimsical description of an expedition to Brentford.

Song—The Mail Coach.

Recitation—Description of the Passengers—Lisping Lady and Critic in Black.

Song—Royal Visitors.

Recitation—Breaking of a Spring—Passengers at Highgate—Literary Butcher—Socrates in the Shambles—Definition of Belles Lettres—French Poets—Rhyming Defended.

Song—Cobbler à la Française.

Recitation—Theatrical Conversation—Dimensions of Drury Lane and Covent Garden Stages—Matter-of-fact conversation—Satire on truisms.

Song—Incontrovertible Facts in various branches of knowledge.

PART SECOND.

Mr. Mathews will deliver an Experimental Lecture on Ventriloquy

PART THIRD.

Recitation—Digression on the Study of the Law—Whimsical Trial—Goody Grin *versus* Lapstone—Scramble at Supper—Drunken Farmer—Extract from Hippisley's Drunken Man.

Song—London Newspapers.

Recitation—Imitation of Fond Barney of York—Arrival of a Scotch Lady—Long story about nothing.

Song—Bartholomew Fair.

Recitation—A Quack Doctor—Mountebank's Harangue—Anecdote of a Yorkshireman.

Song—The Nightingale Club.

The Entertainment to conclude with novel specimens of Imitation, in which several Tragic and Comic Performers will give their different ideas how "Hamlet's advice to the players" should be spoken.

From the various contemporary notices I select the following account of Mathews' first At Home at the Lyceum :



Mathews the Elder as the Spanish Ambassador.

The entertainment consists of a description of passengers, and adventures met with in a mail-coach, and a lecture on ventriloquy. The former commences with remarks on the various kinds of coaches—heavy-coach, light-coach, &c. His companions in the mail are a surly critic, a loquacious Frenchman, and a lisping lady, who prefers talking nonsense to not talking at all. Those who are acquainted with the richness of humour which Mathews possesses, and his inimitable mimical talents, will be able to form some conception of the amusement which these promising objects afford in his hands.

The journey commences northward. The *Critic* is reserved and silent, the *Frenchman* indefatigable in his attempts to draw him into conversation, and at last proves partially successful. The breaking of a spring, however, interrupts their discourse, and detains the passengers for some time at Highgate, where we are introduced to a

literary butcher, who has a particular fondness for reading the history of England, and whose blunders and anachronisms are most ludicrous. The spring at length is repaired, and the passengers proceed on their journey. A laughable dialogue now ensues on the comparative merit of the French and English drama. The Frenchman defends rhyming tragedies, and expresses his extreme admiration of English rhyme, as a specimen of which he favours the company with the old song, "A Cobbler there was," every rhyme of which he contrives to mar in the following ingenious manner :—

"A cobbler there was, and he lived in a stall
Which served him for parlour, for kitchen,
And every thing."

Imitations of Talma and Hullen are now introduced, and the discourse then turns upon the stages of Covent Garden and Drury Lane. The *Critic* declaims violently against the enormous modern theatres, and the *Lisping Lady* now joins in the conversation, with a string of truisms, which arouse his spleen. The First part concludes with a song on "Incontrovertible Facts."

The Second Part consists of a lecture on ventriloquy, which is perhaps the most surprising portion of the entertainment. The scene discovers a bed, which is supposed to contain a gentleman who, under the influence of the spleen and blue devils, always fancies himself dangerously ill. Mathews enters as his French valet. Presently he hears the voice of his child : he looks about, and at length takes from a box beneath the table a large doll, dressed up as a boy. He angrily demands, why he got there? "Oh," says the child, "I wanted to see you perform, and so *I took a box*." The dialogue is carried on between these two with great humour, till the hypochondriac awakes, and calls for his dinner. Mrs. Slop, the housekeeper, and Mr. Cork, the butler, also join in the conversation ; and the quickness with which Mathews adopts his voice to the different characters, shifting it about from place to place, is truly astonishing. This part concludes with a duett, sung by Mathews, alternately with the whole of the imaginary characters.

In the Third Part, the Mail-coach Adventures are resumed. A whimsical description of a trial is introduced, in which the damage done by a pig is the subject of litigation between a superannuated cobbler and Goody Grim. The cross-examination of a Jew pedlar respecting the "unclean animal" is the very height of ludicrous burlesque. An admirable satire upon newspaper puffs, second edition, &c.,

is given succeeded by cross-readings. The richest bit, however, remains to be noticed. This is a long story about nothing, told by an old Scotch lady. Mathews here puts on a shawl and a cap, and so completely assumes the appearance of an old woman that the deception is perfect. This is certainly the most admirable assumption of character we ever yet beheld.

These are but a few of the subjects which are touched upon in the course of the performance. A number of his most admired songs are interspersed, as "The Nightingale Club," "The Mail-coach," &c., which serve to vary the entertainment very delightfully. It concludes with imitations of the principal performers, which are admirable. Those of Fawcett, Munden, Incledon, Young, and others, are inimitable.



Thomas Moore.

The success of the entertainments was instantaneous and remarkable. They drew all London to the Lyceum, and excited the keenest in-

terest in the literary as well as in the theatrical world. The following copy of a letter from Moore to Mathews shows that the audience on one occasion at least included Washington Irving and the author of *Irish Melodies* :

24 BURY STREET, ST. JAMES'S.

Tuesday, April 30th, 1818.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am here but for a short time, and have set apart Thursday for the very great treat of hearing you at the Lyceum; but as they tell me it will be next to impossible to find places without having before secured a box, I presume as far on my acquaintance with you

as to beg your interest for *three seats somewhere*. My friend Mr. Irving (the author of "The Sketch Book"), is one of those that accompany me.

Yours very truly,

THOMAS MOORE.

Mathews gave his At Home until June 17. On that evening, the regular season commenced with a bill which antedated the Wild West shows of our own days by a considerable period. It was announced, to be sure, that "Miss Kelly Retains her usual Situation as a General Actress," but she paled before the troupe of "Native American Indian Warriors lately arrived in England," with their War Whoops, Marches, and Songs. One of the features of the show was the "Surprise and Attack of the Planter's Cottage," a similar incident to that which has been represented at Earl's Court and Olympia in recent years.



Washington Irving.

A curious advertisement appeared at this time from which I gather that—and the fact is not surprising—the frequenters of the establishment were not all of the most desirable class: "A commodious Circle is appropriated to

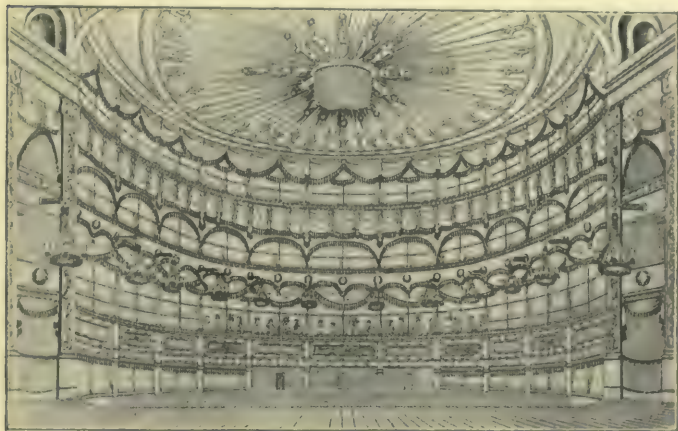
the use of Dressed Company, and every precaution will be taken that no annoyance shall occur to Families, etc., by the intrusion of improper persons." The American Indians were so successful that they gave sixty performances, and in addition, they were exhibited in the large saloon in the intervals during their performances. Their attractions gave place in September to an Automatic Trumpeter, from Vienna. Miss Kelly and Harley were entirely in the shade during this season.

A side light on the poor manner in which theatres were lighted at this time is found in the following announcement of 1818: "An improvement of still more importance, and one which we hope will become general in other places, has been adopted. The smoke issuing from the lamps in the lobbies is conveyed away by tin tubes constructed for the purpose. By this admirable contrivance, not only is the noxious vapour of the oil entirely removed, but a perpetual circulation of air is promoted, similar to that in a room where a fire is kept. In fact, every auditor at the Lyceum now sits in physical comfort."

There is but little to record for the year 1819. Mathews repeated his entertainment, this time entitled *A Trip to Paris*, and Elliston appeared for a benefit. Certain structural alterations were made, not to mention "Entirely Novel Decorations Presenting a Coup d'œil of unrivalled Brilliancy." A new ceiling, several feet lower than the old one, was constructed, and "an improved mode of lighting the Boxes" was introduced. The "Pit accommodation was materially increased by the addition of a Piazza covering the different entrances," and it was proudly stated that "the Pit has now the highest elevation of any theatre in London." The Great Saloon was "tastefully fitted up as

an Illuminated Mamcluke Pavilion and Egyptian Panorama."

The house pursued its uncertain course in 1820 with the fear of the patent theatres continually haunting it. In January, it was occupied for a little time by a slight entertainment called *Soirées Amusantes*, the bill being headed by a quotation from Shakespeare—"The law allows it"—which was intended to show that the license was not being



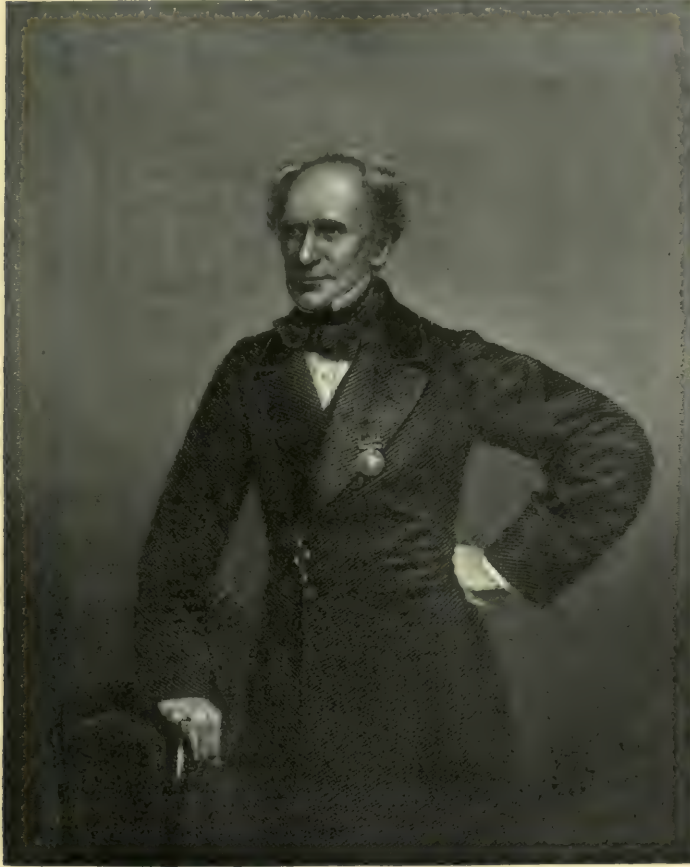
Interior of the Lyceum as arranged for the French Plays, 1828-1830.

jeopardised by the performances of plays. Then, in February,*Mathews was once more At Home, his monologue this time being entitled *Country Cousins* and the *Sights of London*. A noteworthy production of the legitimate season—which was confined to the summer, be it remembered—was a piece the name of which is familiar to all readers of theatrical records—*The Vampire*. This was a melodrama, adapted by J. R. Planché from the

French. The scene was laid in Scotland where, of course, the superstition which forms the basis of the story never existed. The adaptor wished to change this absurd state of affairs, but the proprietor of the theatre—S. J. Arnold—was obdurate and would not permit any alteration: "He had set his heart on Scotch music and dresses—the latter, by the way, were in stock—laughed at my scruples, assured me that the public would neither know nor care—and in those days they certainly did not—and therefore there was nothing left for me but to do my best with it." The result justified the manager's opinion of the public. "The Vampire, or the Bride of the Isles"—to give the play its full title—was brought out on August 9, and it was acted thirty-seven times during the season of 1820 and frequently afterwards. A great hit was made in the principal character by T. P. Cooke, others in the cast being Harley, Bartley, Pearman, and Miss Love. For this piece, the Vampire trap so well known on the stage—although it is not used, even if it exists, in a modern London theatre—was invented, and the final disappearance through it of the Vampire created an enormous sensation.

The production of *The Vampire* led to the introduction of the adaptor thereof to some interesting persons of the time, including "Dicky" Peake, a well-known humorist and dramatic writer of his day, and treasurer of the theatre. Peake's humour consisted of a grotesque combination of ideas. For instance, calling one summer day with Planché on a mutual friend, it was observed that the fireplace in the drawing-room was "ornamented" after the custom of the time with a mass of long strips of white paper falling over the bright bars of the stove, whereupon Peake asked, "Why do you keep your macaroni in the grate?" On another

occasion, he was visiting Beazley, the architect-playwright, in the winter. Beazley's black servant entered to make up



Thomas Potter Cooke.
(Born April 23, 1786 ; died April 4, 1864.)

the fire. Peake whispered to his friend, "Beazley's nigger has been scratching his head, and has got a scuttle of coals

out." His plays, although generally successful afterwards, were usually failures on the first night, a remarkable instance of which was A Hundred-Pound Note, which was hounded down on its initial representation, and subsequently became immensely popular. Even if it did not originate the Christy Minstrel "why and because" conundrum style of jesting, it certainly brought it into vogue. Peake's good temper and obliging disposition—excellent qualities in the treasurer of a theatre!—made him greatly liked. He had so affectionate a regard for Mr. Arnold that, on the morning after the burning down of the theatre, he threw the bond for £200, which Arnold had given him in acknowledgment of his long and faithful service, into the breakfast-room fire, saying "You have lost all by fire, let this go too." Which was rather a pity, as Richard Brinsley Peake died a poor man—"a singular circumstance," as Planché sententiously observes, "considering that he had been for so many years the treasurer of a theatre."

But I must not anticipate events. We have still ten years before us ere we reach the date of the burning of the Lyceum. The success of *The Vampire* stirred up the spirit of discord which animated the lessees of the larger houses in regard to the "minor theatres," as they were contemptuously called. Ten days after the production of *The Vampire*, we find the management issuing a long manifesto referring to the patentees of the "Winter Theatres" who, "incessantly complain of the encroachments of other Theatres," and so forth. A few days later, the struggling house in the Strand continued the discussion. "The following is the *convincing* answer of the Lessee of Drury Lane Theatre to the above statement. The Proprietor

of the English Opera House is anxious to afford it publicity :—

‘This Theatre overflows every Night.

‘The Patentees cannot condescend to enter into a competition of scurrility, which is only fitted for MINOR Theatres—what their powers really are, will be, without any public appeal, legally decided in November next, and any gasconade can only be supposed to be caused by cunning or poverty.’

NOTE.—The Publick will judge as to whom the charge of ‘scurrility’ attaches. As to ‘competition’ in the practice of it, there can be none—for the Proprietor of the English Opera House at once yields the palm (after the foregoing specimen) to the Lessee of the MAJOR Theatre.”

Fortunately, there were not any disastrous results from this particular quarrel, but the patrons of the “minor” theatre were amused, if not edified, by an address on Patent Theatres delivered by Miss Kelly and by the appearance of Wrench as Garrick. The regular season also saw another blood-curdling “operatic” drama dealing with the story of Baron de Trenck, in addition to The Vampire. For a Christmas entertainment, the Soirées Amusantes were again given, and concerts and imitations of popular actors were in vogue until February, 1821, when Mathews was once more At Home. He appeared again in May. There was also an Astronomical Exhibition with the wonderful title Ouranologia, in the course of which Bartley, the actor, lectured.

It is curious to find that the Fancy Dress Balls instituted at Covent Garden by Sir Augustus Harris and carried on there in our own day were anticipated, even in regard to the price of the tickets, in 1821, at the old Lyceum. They were then called Carnivals, admission was fixed at a guinea, and the supper tickets cost half-a-guinea. The latter

included wine, a truly liberal provision. "Private Supper Rooms may be engaged for Parties," an interesting statement which is cast into the shade by the announcement that "The Police will be numerous!"

From Carnivals and supper parties attended by a large force of constabulary, we pass—for the second time in the



Mrs. Glover.

history of the Lyceum—to the sublimity of Shakespeare. But this was not in the ordinary course of events, for the ban which forbade Shakespeare at the "minor" theatres had not been removed, and the classical drama could only be represented on special occasions and by express sanction. So it came about that Mrs. Glover (1781-1850) played Hamlet here for her benefit, the performance being witnessed by some of the celebrities of the day. Fortu-

nately, there is a reference to this important event—for Mrs. Glover was the first female impersonator of Hamlet—in the reminiscences of Walter Donaldson, an actor who took a small part in the performance. The theatre, he states, was crowded. Mrs. Glover's "noble figure, handsome and expressive face, rich and powerful voice, all

contributed to rivet the attention of the *élite* assembled on this occasion ; while continued bursts of applause greeted her finished elocution as she delivered the soliloquies so well known to her delighted auditors. In the stage-box were seated Edmund Kean, Michael Kelly, Munden, and the Hon. Douglas Kinnaird. At the end of the first act, Kean came behind the scenes and shook Mrs. Glover, not by one, but by both hands, and exclaimed, 'Excellent ! excellent !' The splendid actress, smilingly cried, 'Away ! you flatterer ! you come in mockery to 'scoff and scorn at our solemnity !'' The actress, methinks, dissembled her gratification, for the great actor was not one to flatter, and praise from a Hamlet, one of whose finest touches was in the scene with the Ghost, to the actress who had just spoken the familiar lines, was praise indeed. Mrs. Glover, who was a Miss Betterton, and received her early training in Bath, was supported by her father as the Ghost, Mrs. Brereton as the Queen, and Miss E. Blanchard—in the absence, "through domestic affliction," of Miss Kelly—as Ophelia.

This interesting event over, the house resumed the dull monotony of closed doors until the beginning of the regular season in June. Miss Kelly made a great hit in a farce called Matrimony. The Vampire was again in the bills, and two pieces which had considerable vogue in their day, Rosina and the Rendezvous, were brought out. Two other pieces, a comedy-opera, Bachelor's Wives, and Love's Dream, with Miss Kelly in both, were played "by special desire of Her Majesty." On the Coronation Day of George IV.—July 19, 1821—the London theatres, Drury Lane, Covent Garden, the English Opera House, the Hay-market, and Sadler's Wells, were opened free to the "Publick," admission being by ticket previously obtained.

Lytton

Fipley and Amelrosa.

Nat.



Sir Silverson Screwnerve. Mons. Zephyr.

Llewelyn ab Llwyd.

Mr. Mark Magnum.

Mathews the Elder in several of his famous characters (1822).

On July 30, a dramatic version of Guy Mannering, entitled *The Witch of Darncleugh*, was produced, with Miss Kelly as Meg Merrilies.

The tale of the succeeding years is much the same—burlettas, comedy-operas, farces, and a constant struggle for life against the superior attractions of the larger and privileged houses. It is strange to find that the benefit of the widow of the late Drury Lane prompter took place at this despised “minor” theatre, Liston appearing as Figaro in *The Marriage of Figaro*, and Madame Vestris singing on the occasion. In addition to a widow, the improvident man left fourteen children, “ten of whom are utterly destitute.” The fact that gas was not in high favour as an illuminating power in 1823 is shown by the advertisement for the opening of this season, which announced that “twelve elegant new cut glass chandeliers have been added and are to be lighted with WAX.” Please note the capital letters. Mathews appeared here again in 1823 and 1824. On July 22, in the latter year, a production of some moment was that of Weber’s opera, *Der Freischütz* or the Seventh Ballet, an “eccentrick vehicle of Musick and Scenic effect,” for which the services of a “largely encreased orchestra” were necessary. A sensation was made by T. P. Cooke as Zamiel, others in the cast being Bartley and Braham. *Der Freischütz* brought a rare measure of prosperity to the theatre, for it was played forty-three times during the season. It is also of interest to note that, on October 11 of this year, *The Rivals* was allowed to be acted here, for a City benefit. A few nights later, “the Celebrated Professional Gentleman”—whoever he was!—appeared, but he does not seem to have been received with the enthusiasm which called for a repetition of his efforts.

January, 1825, ushered in the appearance of one Jean Henri,

FIRST TAMBOUR MAJOR
TO THE EMPEROR
NAPOLEON.

who played "fifteen differently-toned drums in a soft and harmonious style." I am glad that the playing was "soft and harmonious." But there was more even of novelty in this show than the playing of the drums: "during this perform-



Miss Goward (Mrs. Keeley).

ance he causes 28 drumsticks to fly in the air in all directions, catching them in a peculiar manner, under his arms and legs." It is evident that he did catch them, too, for several performances were given. The regular season of 1825 is notable inasmuch as, on June 30, it introduced to the London public Miss Goward, from the Theatre Royal, Norwich, as Little Pickle in a musical entertainment called *The Spoil'd Child*. Miss Goward, who was so long

known to Londoners as Mrs. Keeley, was in good company, for others playing with her at this time were Braham, Mathews, Bartley, Wrench, and Cooke, Miss Stephens, Miss Paton, and Miss Kelly. The Beggar's Opera, and Rosina, a "pastoral opera," were favourites of the season. Mathews, in *The Boarding House* and *Jonathan* in England, in September, and, in March, 1826, in his

Imitations, maintained his wonderful popularity. The season of 1826 saw some blood-curdling productions called *The Death Fetch* and *The Oracle or the Interrupted Sacrifice*, as well as a new act drop by T. and W. Grieve. Then came Mathews again in *A Trip to America*, in November, and, again, from March to June, 1827. In the latter month, Mons. Vestris, who is seldom mentioned in theatrical annals, danced for his benefit, and M^{de}. Vestris sang for it.

We have heard much in recent years of masques and other old-time amusements, and of Purcell's music. But the Lyceum anticipated this revival, as it did so much else. For Dryden's masque of *Arthur and Emmeline*, accompanied by Purcell's music, opened the season of 1827. It was, however, hardly strong enough fare, and was quickly followed by *The Vampire*, *The Cornish Miners*, *The Padlock*, *The Freebooters*, *The Spoil'd Child*, and other melodramatic and musical pieces.

Although the English classical drama was forbidden to the English Opera House—the name of the Lyceum was not used at this period—foreign languages made a difference. For at the *Soirées Françaises*—for which a heavy subscription was exacted from the public—held in March, 1828, I find that the following plays by Molière were acted : *Les Fourberies de Scapin*, *Le Médecin Malgré Lui*, *Le Tartuffe*, *L'Avare*, *Le Dépit Amoureux*, and *Le Misanthrope*. *Le Mariage de Figaro*, by Beaumarchais, was also played, together with two one-act pieces the titles of which recall other plays which are known all over the modern playgoing world—*M. Sans-Gêne* and *Trilby*. The season of 1828 also brought to light—on July 7—one of the most renowned plays of the period in *The Bottle Imp*, with

O. Smith as the Imp, supported by Robert Keeley and James Vining. This fearful and wonderful piece was such a popular success that it was played forty-five times, the regular season ending with it on October 3.

A month later, and we come to an event of singular interest in this history—the appearance of Edmund Kean in the theatre where, in 1821, he had seen Mrs. Glover in the character of Hamlet. An explosion of gas had occurred at Covent Garden, making it necessary to close the theatre for repairs, and the company found a temporary home at the “minor” house in the Strand. In that company was Edmund Kean, then in his decline, but with flashes of his old genius. The opening bill is curious:

THE COMPANY OF THE THEATRE ROYAL
COVENT GARDEN,

with the cheerful consent of the Proprietors,
Respectfully announce that, DURING THE INTERVAL OF CLOSING
THE ABOVE THEATRE, for the completion of the alterations now
in progress, they will perform

By permission of the Right Honourable

THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN

(and by the prompt accommodation of S. J. Arnold, Esq.)
at the Theatre Royal,

ENGLISH OPERA HOUSE. *Lyrene*

1828 The Covent Garden company accordingly opened, on Monday, November 17, 1828, in Richard III., with Kean as the Richard. This was followed, as a lively contrast to the tragedy, by Charles the Second, or the Merry Monarch, interpreted by Charles Kemble, Wrench, and Miss Goward. On the following evening, the chief piece in the bill was As You Like It, with Charles Kemble as Orlando, Shakespeare being supplemented by Bombastes Furioso

and Rosina. On the Wednesday, November 19, Kean acted Shylock, and on the Thursday, Charles Kemble was the chief attraction as Doricourt in *The Belle's Stratagem*. On the Friday, November 21, Kean was seen as Sir Giles



Charles Kemble.

Overreach in *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, Charles Kemble being the Wellborn, the popular *Bottle Imp* being the afterpiece. Saturday's bill was *The Jealous Wife* with Charles Kemble as Oakley, and on Monday,

November 24, *Othello* was represented, "with the same attention to costumes" as in the previous productions, with Kean as *Othello*, Warde as *Iago*, Kemble as *Cassio*. On the Tuesday came *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, with Bartley as *Falstaff*, a Miss Forde as *Mrs. Ford*, and M^dme. Vestris as *Mrs. Page*. A triple bill consisting of *Charles the Second*, Beazley's farce, *The £100 Note*, and the irrepressible *Bottle Imp*, provided Wednesday's entertainment. Kean made his last appearance here on Thursday, November 27, as *Shylock*. *The Merchant of Venice* was followed on this occasion by the *Beggar's Opera*, in which Miss Goward made her first appearance as *Lucy*.

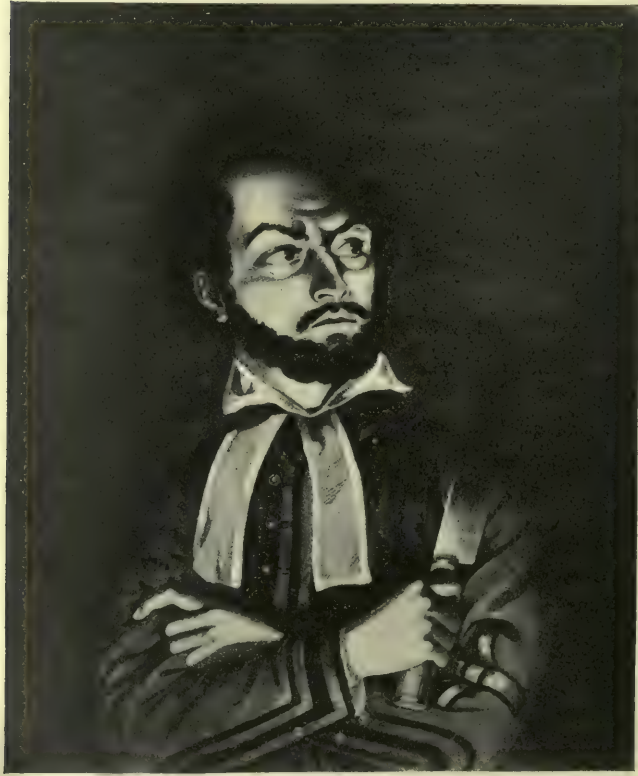
The prices for this memorable engagement were as follows: Boxes, 7s., second price, 3s. 6d.; Pit, 3s. 6d., second price, 2s.; Gallery, 2s., second price, 1s.; Upper Gallery, 1s. It was "respectfully announced that the Free List of Covent Garden Theatre does NOT extend to these performances, with the exception of the Gentlemen of the Public Press, whose Privileges will be continued as usual."

Happy, indeed, were the Gentlemen of the Public Press, as well as the public, to thus see Edmund Kean in four of his greatest characters—*Richard*, *Shylock*, *Othello*, and *Sir Giles Overreach*. For, according to Dr. Doran, "to those who saw him from the front, there was not a trace of weakening of any power in him. But, oh ye few who stood between the wings where a chair was placed for him, do you not remember the saddening spectacle of that wrecked genius—a man in his very prime, with not merely the attributes of age about him, but with some of the infirmities of it, which are wont to try the heart of love itself?"



Edmund Kean as Richard III.

We now come to the end of the old building which, with its alterations and additions, dated, nevertheless, from 1772. There is nothing of special note to chronicle for the year



Edmund Kean as Shylock.

1829. Miss Kelly is still the star of the company, and Frank Matthews has made his first appearance here. In February, 1830, the *Soirées Françaises* were again in full swing. On Monday, the 15th of that month, the first



Edmund Kean as Sir Giles Overreach.

performance had been given of a three-act comedy, *Les Trois Quartiers*. There is an interesting programme—as distinguished from the ordinary dirty, ink-running English



Edmund Kean as Othello.

bill of the play—in the British Museum which bears a written note so arranged that it takes in the printed line giving the name of the theatre. It is as follows:

This evening [Monday, February 15, 1830], Mary, Betsy, and

myself were in Private Box No. 30 of the English Opera House, and saw all the entertainment. Between one and two in the morning of 16 February, the

THEATRE ROYAL, ENGLISH OPERA HOUSE, STRAND,
was entirely destroyed by fire.

So ended the Lyceum of 1772 to 1830. Who, I wonder, were Mary and Betsy, not to mention "myself"?

Miss Kelly, who was so long associated with the early history of the Lyceum, deserves more than a passing mention. She was the daughter of an army captain, and the niece of Michael Kelly, singer, musician, and delightful gossip. Born on October 15, 1790, Frances Maria Kelly lived until December 7, 1882, although two attempts on her life were made by disappointed admirers. Her stage *début* was notable, for she played Prince Arthur to the King John of John



Frances Maria Kelly, in 1821.

Philip Kemble, the Faulconbridge of Charles Kemble, and the Constance of Mrs. Siddons in a revival of Shakespeare's play at Drury Lane on December 11, 1800. Mrs. Siddons prophesied great things for her, so, also, did Sheridan, who witnessed the performance. From Drury Lane she went to Glasgow, after which probation she appeared at the Haymarket, the Lyceum, and Drury

Lane. She was a great favourite at the Lyceum in such pieces as *Harlequin Hoax*, *The Maid and the Magpie*, and *The Miller's Maid*. The first occasion upon which her life was attempted was on February 17, 1816, when a miscreant fired at her from the pit of Drury Lane while she was acting in a farce called the *Merry Mourners*. Her assailant was tried at the Old Bailey, but was adjudged insane. The second attack was made in Dublin, but she escaped unhurt, although another person was slightly wounded. Miss Kelly, who lived at 73, Dean Street, Soho, for some time, built the theatre, at the back of her house, which was known successively as *Miss Kelly's Theatre*, the *Soho Theatre*, and the *Royalty Theatre*. The theatre embraced the site of an old dissecting-room, rather a gruesome memory for the spectators of comic operas and farces. Miss Kelly's Royal Dramatic School and Theatre was under the patronage of the Duke of Devonshire, when it was first started. It lasted from 1833 to 1849, and Miss Kelly won great esteem for the admirable manner in which she conducted it. Unfortunately, the undertaking ended in disaster, and Miss Kelly lost the larger part of the small fortune which she had accumulated by the efforts of her earlier years. On the petition of a memorial which was signed by many distinguished persons, including Lord Lytton, Sir Theodore and Lady Martin (Helen Faucit), Sir Frederick Leighton, Robert Browning, Anthony Trollope, and Matthew Arnold, she received a Crown grant which ensured her old age against poverty. It is curious, and pleasant, to reflect that the aged actress was visited in her retirement by two players who were subsequently associated with the name, if not the actual theatre, of her former triumphs—John Lawrence Toole and Henry Irving. Miss

Kelly was the real heroine of Charles Lamb's delightful essay, *Barbara S—*, which appeared in the *London Magazine* in April, 1825. Lamb held Miss Kelly in great esteem. In addition to making her his heroine, he alluded to her, in the course of the article itself, in flattering terms: "I was always fond of the society of players, and am not sure that an impediment in my speech (which certainly kept me out of the pulpit) even more than certain personal disqualifications, which are often got over in that profession, did not prevent me at one time of life from adopting it. I have had the honour (I must ever call it) once to have been admitted to the tea-table of Miss Kelly. I have played at serious whist with Mr. Liston. I have chatted with ever good-humoured Mrs. Charles Kemble. I have conversed as friend to friend with her accomplished husband. I have been indulged with a classical conference with Macready; and with a sight of the Player-picture gallery, at Mr. Matthews's, when the kind owner, to remunerate me for my love of the old actors (whom he loves so much), went over it with me, supplying to his capital collection what alone the artist could not give them—voice; and their living motion." The burning of the Lyceum brought Miss Kelly's long connection with the house to an end.

CHAPTER IV

1834-1847

The present theatre erected—Samuel Beazley, the architect-author—
The gallery staircase—The Mountain Sylph—Keeley and Miss
Novello—Frédéric Lemaître—La Sonnambula—"Ice cream
gratis"—The Bottle Imp—A sacred concert—Sheridan Knowles
in *The Wife*—The Huguenots—Mrs. Fitzwilliam—Italian Opera
—"William Shakespeare"—Promenade Concerts—Balfe's season
—Press opinions—Barnaby Rudge—Samuel Phelps in *Martinuzzi*
—Carter, the *Lion King*—Pierce Egan—The Keeley management
—Martin Chuzzlewit—The Chimes—The Cricket on the Hearth—
Tom Thumb—Nell Gwynne—Dickens again—The *Battle of Life*
—Sam Emery—End of the Keeley reign

THE proprietor of the Lyceum Theatre took his loss philosophically, and immediately put in hand the building of the new house. The London street improvements of the period gave him a much-desired opportunity for the erection of a handsome and generally appropriate theatre. The making of Wellington Street, in particular, was a great advantage, for it enabled the architect to place the main entrance there, and by the opening of Burleigh Street he was able to provide the private entrance which has so often been trod by the great in the dramatic and artistic world of our time and so frequently—during Sir Henry Irving's long connection with the Lyceum—graced by

royalty. The new theatre, called the Royal Lyceum and English Opera House, was opened on July 14, 1834, with a "grand opera," which has long since vanished into oblivion, entitled *Nourjahad*. Some of the announcements to the public on the occasion are quaint reading nowadays. The would-be dramatists were evidently just as much to



The Lyceum and Wellington Street, 1834.

the fore in those days as in our own, for it was found necessary to thus abjure them: "The numerous Authors who have done the Proprietor the honour to send Dramas for his consideration, are entreated to allow *Time* for reading their productions." Again, the patriotic note in this address to the public is rather pleasing, even though it

be somewhat non-committal : " The management promises to devote itself to the employment and encouragement of BRITISH TALENT in every department of the Theatre, but without exclusion of any extraordinary genius in the various branches of art connected with Dramatic representation, which may be deemed attractive to the Public, or an object of emulation to our indigenous Artists." A week later, the bill of the play stated the obvious facts that " Discomfort is promptly felt, while ordinary comforts are overlooked " by way of drawing public attention to " the superior ventilation of the new theatre."

Samuel Beazley, the builder of the Lyceum Theatre as it was known from 1834 until 1903, was a remarkable man, inasmuch as he combined the faculties of play-writing with architecture. In addition to the Lyceum, he erected the St. James's Theatre, and was responsible for the colonnade of Drury Lane Theatre, and the old part of the Adelphi Theatre. He was the architect of the South Eastern Railway, and for that company he built their London Bridge Station and a hotel the name of which is known the world over—the Lord Warden, at Dover. He was a most industrious, prolific, and versatile man, for, in addition to an enormous amount of work in his profession as an architect, he wrote over a hundred farces and other light pieces for the stage, including *Five Hours at Brighton*, *The Boarding House*, *Is He Jealous?* *Gretna Green*, *The Lottery Ticket*, and *My Uncle*, all of which were great favourites in the fourth and fifth decades of the last century, especially at the Lyceum. Born in 1786, he died in 1851. He wrote his own epitaph :

Here lies Samuel Beazley,
Who lived hard and died eas'ly.

Unfortunately, he was not prophetic, for he suffered considerably before his death. In fact, his usual spirits having forsaken him, in consequence of the pain which he was suffering, he penned a rather melancholy letter which the friend to whom he had written it likened unto "The last chapter of Jeremiah." "You are mistaken, my dear fellow," he retorted, "it is the last chapter of Samuel." He was a most generous man. He could always lend a friend five pounds, although he never had as many shillings for himself. A companion who was driving to town with him on one occasion remarked on the comfort of being independent of public conveyances. "Yes," he replied, "but I'm rather a remarkable man. I have a carriage, and a cabriolet, and three horses, and a coachman and a footman, and a large house, and a cook, and three maid-servants, and a mother and a sister, and—half a crown." Yet, he was never in debt, and he left his widow amply provided for, not to mention many legacies for friends. He built theatres and wrote for them. He was always in a hurry, and yet had a kind word for every one. He had always "just arrived by the mail" in time to see the fish removed from the table, or was going off by the early coach after the last dance at four in the morning. "At dinner, or at a ball," wrote James Robinson Planché, who knew him well, "was there a lady who appeared neglected because she was old, ill-favoured, or uninteresting, Beazley was sure to pay her the most respectful and delicate attention. Not a breath of scandal ever escaped his lips; not one unkind word did I ever hear him utter. There were two men whom he held in horror; but he never abused them; his brow darkened if their names were mentioned but by that, and his silence alone, could you have

surmised that he entertained the least feeling against them. His pleasant sayings would fill a volume. The wit was, perhaps, not particularly pungent, but it was always playful. Building a staircase for Sir Henry Meux, he called it making a new 'Gradus ad Parnassum,' because it was steps for the *meuses*. Some very old brandy, pathetically pointed out by George Robins as having been left to him by his father, he proposed should be called 'Spirit of my Sainted Sire,' and when the question arose of how the title of Herold's charming opera, *Le Pré aux Clercs*, should be rendered in English, he quietly suggested 'Parson's Green.'

It is strange that such a man should have been accused of committing so stupid a blunder as the omission of the gallery staircase, which had to be erected after the theatre was built, from his plans. Yet this error has been attributed to him ever since 1834 down to the present year of grace, although it has been frequently contradicted. The new Lyceum Theatre, as we have seen, was opened on July 14, 1834, and, two days later, the architect, writing from 29, Soho Square, addressed the following letter to the *Times* :—

SIR—Not supposing that any one would seriously believe that I had forgotten the gallery staircase in the new theatre, I suffered it to pass unnoticed, but understanding that the paragraph had been copied into most of the London journals, I am urged by my friends to contradict a report for which there is no foundation.

The fact is that for the additional security of the audience in case of fire all the entrances, together with wardrobes, green-room, dressing-rooms, and offices, are placed on the outside of the main wall of the theatre, and the staircase to the gallery is in that compartment on the north side which is devoted to the dressing-rooms, green-room, &c. ; and it not being within Mr. Arnold's plan to erect

that compartment of the building until the theatre (the main point) was completed and open, it of course became necessary to construct a temporary staircase to the gallery until that part of the building could be finished. An inspection of the original plan, copies of which may be seen at the Woods and Forests, at my office, and at my builders', Messrs. Grissel and Peto, will convince anybody of the truth of this statement. I can only add that the temporary staircase has been constructed with every regard to security, and has been inspected by the architects to the Woods and Forests, the district surveyor, and the surveyor of the pavement, as well as built under my own superintendence.

Your giving publicity to this fact, and contradicting the rumour, will add to the obligation already conferred by your favourable report of my building.

I remain, Sir, your most obdt. servant,

SAMUEL BEAZLEY.

Commenting on this, the *Athenaeum* of July 19 humorously observed :—

“ We are happy to perceive by Mr. Beazley's letter to the papers that he has explained away his supposed omission of a gallery staircase. The temporary wooden stairs at present seen outside the theatre might very naturally *lead people up* to such a belief ; but the judicious *steps* taken will set all right again and bring people's understandings down to the real ground on which the matter rests.”

Nourjahad, the music of which was by “ E. Loder of Bath,” gave way as a staple attraction on August 25, to John Barnett's opera, *The Mountain Sylph*, the first success of the new Lyceum. Robert Keeley and Miss Novello were in the cast, and the charming music was highly praised. Much of the success which it won was due to the scenic and other effects including an Incantation, an Infernal Invocation, a Dance of Demons, and a Highland Reel. The run of *The Mountain Sylph* was extended

until November. The performance in October began at eight o'clock, and half-price had been abolished. In that month, the management thus asserted the respectability of the establishment: "Families can visit the New English Opera House without the probability of coming in contact with any description of improper company." We also find that the "Proprietor is determined to adhere to the same system of liberality, in introducing the efforts of Native Talent, and he confidently relies for success in his arduous undertaking on that encouragement which would, he humbly suggests, reflect a full share of honour upon the age and country."

The uphill game continued, for it was impossible to become rich when the theatre was so limited in the duration of its season. The occasional performances of the winter months were not a source of much profit. They were, however, of some interest at times. Thus in February, 1835, we find the noted French actor, Frédéric Lemaître, appearing as Robert Macaire—a character afterwards played on the same boards by Henry Irving—in *L'Auberge des Adrets*. The regular season commenced earlier than usual this year—on April 20. It embraced, in addition to *The Mountain Sylph*, a spectacular piece bearing the wonderful title *Sadak and Kalasrade*, or the *Waters of Oblivion*. More notable, however, was the representation of *La Sonnambula*, with Miss E. Romer as Amina and Miss P. Horton as Lisa. But I fear that Bellini's opera was not a particular attraction, for I find the management resorting to all sorts of dodges wherewith to draw the public. The theatre, it was confidently asserted, was cool in summer and warm in winter—"a consummation devoutly to be wished" so far as the

London theatres are concerned at the present time. Here is the announcement which was issued in June, 1835 :

THE PUBLIC
are most respectfully informed that, in consequence of
its complete ventilation, the
TEMPERATURE OF THIS THEATRE
is many degrees cooler than that of the external
atmosphere !

The programme was also embellished with a quotation from *Measure for Measure*, "To reside in thrilling region of thick-ribbed ice." It is to be hoped that this was alluring. More effective, I imagine, was the bribe of

AN EXCELLENT ICED CREAM OR WATER ICE
GRATIS.

If the atmosphere was chilling in the auditorium—a frequent condition, in another sense, of the establishment at this period—matters on the stage were sufficiently exciting. *The Bottle Imp*, *A Father's Crime*, *The Vampire*, and *The Dice of Death* are titles which tell their own tale. The management was a sanguine one, for the license of the theatre was extended to January 15, and the house was—theoretically, at least—made "warm and comfortable" for the winter. A masquerade ball was held in November, and in December, Oxberry, Mrs. Frank Matthews, and other players of good repute performed *The Rose of Ettrick Vale*, to two-shilling boxes, a shilling pit, and a sixpenny gallery.

The diversified character of the English Opera House was strangely exemplified in March, 1836, when a sacred concert was held, the chief artist whose name is known to the present generation being Clara Novello. A great feature of the programme was *O Salutaris Hostia*. In the

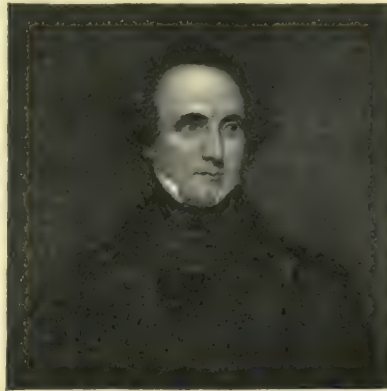
same month, Sheridan Knowles appeared, for a benefit, in his play of *The Wife*. Now, alas, comes a signal of distress which is not surprising. On April 4, the bills announced a commonwealth season, "circumstances having prevented



Mrs. Fitzwilliam
(as Mrs. Page in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*).

the proprietor of this elegant and commodious theatre from carrying into effect the customary" one. Among the company who thus divided the receipts were T. Wrench, J. Serle, J. Bland, Wm. Oxberry, Miss Priscilla Horton, Miss Novello, Mrs. Frank Matthews, Mrs. Keeley, and Mrs. Nisbett. Melodrama and operetta still constituted the

bill of fare, *The Huguenots* being played as a two-act melodrama. *The Cornish Miners*, *The Smuggler of St. Brieux*, and other blood-and-thunder pieces still retained their hold of the stage, if not of the audience. A rather remarkable appearance was that of Mrs. Fitzwilliam in *The Pet of the Petticoats*, the music of which was by John Barnett, whose *Mountain Sylph* attained its 120th representation during this season. Apart from its music, it relied for effect upon an Incantation, an Infernal Invocation, a Dance of Demons, and *Salamandrine Caverns*. Mrs. Fitzwilliam followed in *The Middy Ashore*, and a popular piece was Beazley's farce, *Gretna Green*.



James Sheridan Knowles.

Still another turn in the wheel, and we have, in the winter of 1836-7, Italian opera, under the direction of J. Mitchell, "in compliance with the wishes of many Noblemen and Gentlemen," and with the assistance of the noted horn-player, Signor Puzzi. The dress-circle was converted into private boxes for this auspicious season, and, "at the request of the Noblemen and Gentlemen," afore-said, the performance did not begin until 8.30. The names of the artists who sang are unknown to the present generation; so, also, are the titles of some of the operas. *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *L'Elisire d'Amore* we all know, and some of us have heard of Donizetti's *Il Furioso*. But what

of the Chiara de Rosenberg of Ricci and the Nina Puzza of Coppola? Mercadante's opera, *La Testa di Bronzo*, was also given. The conductor was Julius Benedict, who was billed as Pianist to the King of Naples. Italian opera was succeeded by a season of French plays, and on July 20, 1837, Madame Vestris assumed the reins of management. A feature of the season was a long-forgotten piece, *Catherine Grey*, with music by Michael William Balfe. Henry Compton, "from the Theatre Royal, York," made his first appearance in London as Tommy Tadpole in *The Haunted Man* and Robin in *The Waterman*. *La Sonnambula* was again sung, also *Fra Diavolo*, Miss Romer, the Amina of Bellini's opera, being the Zerlina. In the winter, Mitchell again tempted fate with Italian opera, Signor Puzzi being now announced as the Director, and Benedict being still the conductor. Frederick Lablache was the Dulcamara in *L'Elisire d'Amore* during this season.

With the summer season came a brief appearance of an individual who had the misfortune to be called William Shakespeare. Far from being abashed by such nomenclature, he traded upon it, and on June 25, 1838, he issued this manifesto: "Being a lone stranger in this animated wilderness, London! I am under the necessity of introducing myself to your notice with the hope that your good nature will pardon a tyro's ambition, should it even o'er vault his discretion. I bear the name and am veritably a descendant of the family of William Shakespeare, of the Elizabethan era, 'the poet of all time!'—but—'What's in a name?'" What, indeed? The gentleman rejoicing in the honoured name made his first appearance on July 14 in a "dramatic sketch," in four scenes, of which he was the

author. William Shakespeare played himself, the other characters being Richard Burbage, the Earl of Leicester, and Queen Elizabeth. But "indisposition" soon afflicted the bearer of the name of the great dramatist, and he retired into that oblivion from which he never again emerged.

The next incident of interest was the production of *The Devil's Opera*, the music by G. Alexander Macfarren, Wieland, the pantomimist, being the *Diavoletto*. Rob Roy was also seen at this time. From December, 1838, to March, 1839, the Theatre Royal Lyceum and English Opera House, gave itself up to the delights of Promenade Concerts, the price of admission being a shilling, with seats in the balcony at double that charge. "The pit," it was advertised, "is boarded over, and refreshments of every description may be had within the house." The theatre was also "heated." These concerts met with a certain measure of success, for sixty performances were given, the favourite composers being Weber, Handel, Herold, Strauss, Rossini, Auber, and Beethoven. In April, came a burletta, in two acts, entitled *Lady Mary Wortley Montague*, in which Mrs. Stirling was seen as the heroine.

On April 22 of this year, there appeared an announcement which brings us into touch with our own times. A series of Military Promenade Concerts was begun "by permission of Her Most Gracious Majesty and under the patronage of His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge," the Coldstreams' band, under the conductorship of Godfrey, being the musical feature. It is not a little strange to think that the Duke of Cambridge is still making speeches and performing other public functions, while the name of Godfrey is perpetuated in several descendants who are in the musical profession. The Lyceum concerts were much

appreciated by the public, for they were repeated in the spring of the following year, 1840. During the regular season, *The Demon Gift* and *The Corsair's Revenge* evidently got confused with the promenade concerts in the public mind, for it was necessary to state on the bills



Michael William Balfe.

that "No strangers will be admitted behind the scenes on any consideration whatever." In August, a charitable performance was given under the patronage of the Duchess of Cambridge and the Princess of Capua. In October, the promenade concerts were again in evidence. "The stage is decorated in a most costly manner, and the walls of the theatre"—so ran the bills—"are embellished by a series of

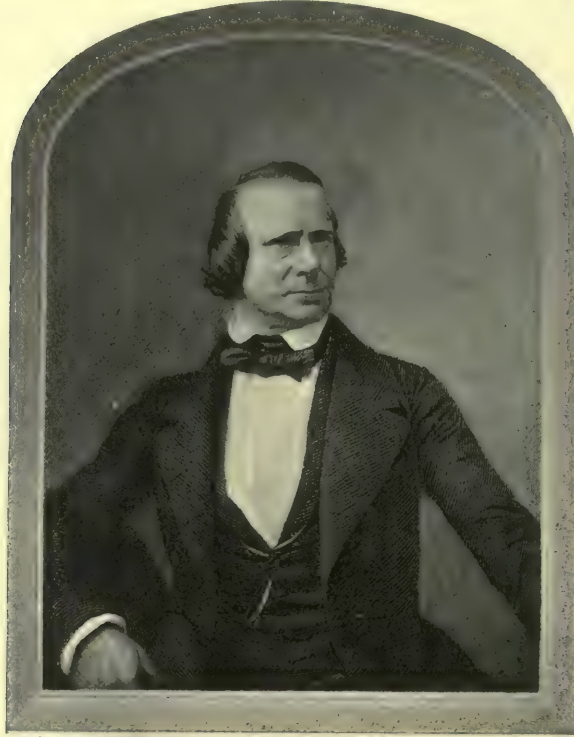
designs and illustrations in the style of Watteau." For the first time in its history, the Lyceum now published Opinions of the Press, extracts being quoted from the *Morning Herald*, the *Times*, the *Sunday Times*, and the *Planet*. In the spring of 1841, Balfe took possession of the Lyceum in the triple capacity of composer, conductor, and manager. His *Köolanthe* or the *Unearthly Bride* was played 21 times. A great success was made by the *Siege of Rochelle*. On June 28, 1841, came the first adaptation of Dickens' novel, *Barnaby Rudge*. The adapter whose name, however, did not appear on the bill of the play, was Charles Selby, who acted Chester, Miss Fortescue being the *Barnaby Rudge*. The adaptation proved a great draw, for it was acted 45 times. "The exalted position this theatre for-



merly held in public estimation is once more attained!" Thus ran the proud managerial announcement. Nay, more: "The Public Press liberally awards its influence to waft the vessel along the Stream of Success!!!!!"

Dickens was succeeded, on August 26, by Martinuzzi, a play in which Samuel Phelps, Mrs. Warner, Miss Fitzwalter, and Miss Maywood appeared. What was Martinuzzi and why was Samuel Phelps playing in

Wellington-street ? are questions which may well be asked. The play was by George Stephens, Esq.—so the bills called him—who had written a tragedy called *The Patriot*. But the patent theatres still possessed the sole right to perform



Samuel Phelps.

tragedy and the classic drama, and Phelps was not in possession of one of those favoured houses. So *The Patriot* was transformed into *Martinuzzi* and songs were introduced, the Act of Parliament being thus evaded. The

author, being at that time a man of means, took the Lyceum for a month, and he had the satisfaction of seeing his play performed for 27 nights. The acting of Phelps and Mrs. Warner was much praised. Tragedy in five acts was forbidden to the Lyceum, but it could be played in three acts "with songs"—a ridiculous anomaly. A special license was obtained for these performances, from August 26 to September 25.

Promenade concerts again formed the winter attraction, and from the May until September following, the Theatre Royal, Lyceum, indulged in Olympic Revels, the work of J. R. Planché and Charles Dance, with Alfred Wigan as the bright particular star. The poor drama found itself ousted in September by Mr. Carter, the Lion King! This monarch of the wild beasts—his troupe consisted of lions, tigers, leopards, and panthers—appeared in a Zoological Dramatic Sketch entitled *The Lion King* or *the Slave Merchant's Vow*, the chief scene of which was laid in the Valley of the Lion's Lair. On September 28, *The Lion King* having failed to draw the town, *Life in Dublin* was presented, with the author, Pierce Egan, as Bob Logic. The Lyceum was now resigned to a period of degeneration and degradation. On November 21, "to celebrate the natal day of Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal of England," a Masquerade was held. Then came *Studies from the Antique* and the first appearance of the *India Rubber Wonder*. In December, Jullien's concerts lightened the prevailing gloom, but on January 25, 1843, I. A. Van Amburgh and Carter—the aforesaid Lion King—took possession of the house, which was the home for several weeks of banjo playing, vaulting, horses, wild animals, and "the beautiful domesticated

pony, Oceola." It was called the American Amphitheatre—Van Amburgh, whose name is associated with the foolish trick indulged in by some foolhardy lion tamers of putting the head in the animal's mouth, came from America—and, moreover, it was "under the patronage of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen." The theatre made a brief return to drama with a revival, under the management of Mrs. Waylett, of Barnaby Rudge, in April, 1843, but darkness fell upon it during the next eight months.

January 29, 1844, was a red letter day for the Lyceum. The licensing law, which had for so long protected the larger houses, was altered at last in favour of the despised minor theatres which were now free to play Shakespeare and other five-act and classical pieces. So, on the date mentioned, the Lyceum discarded the second part of its title, and ceased to be called the English Opera House. Mr. and Mrs. Keeley delivered the opening address, and the first part of King Henry IV. was played with Richard Younge as the King and an amateur, Captain Harvey Tuckett, as Falstaff. It is not surprising that the venture was not successful; after a fortnight's trial, the theatre closed. Still, *The Honeymoon* and *Romeo and Juliet* had been played, as well as the Falstaff piece, and this was something. At Easter, Mrs. Keeley assumed the managerial reins, opening with a burlesque, *The Forty Thieves*, in which Mr. and Mrs. Keeley, Mr. Alfred Wigan, Mr. Frank Matthews, and the beautiful Miss Fairbrother played the chief parts.

The Lyceum saw, on July 8, the first stage version of *Martin Chuzzlewit*. *His Friends, Relatives, and Enemies* was the second part of the title. Dickens had already done the Lyceum good service with *Barnaby Rudge*, but

Martin Chuzzlewit brought it the first run of success that it had ever known. Ninety performances were given in its first season. The adaptation was in eighteen scenes, and the cast was as follows:—Young Martin Chuzzlewit, Frederick Vining; Old Martin Chuzzlewit, Richard Younge; Pecksniff, Frank Matthews; Tigg, Alfred Wigan; Jonas, Sam Emery; Tom Pinch, Drinkwater Meadows; Bailey, Mrs. Keeley; Mrs. Gamp, Robert Keeley; Betsey Prig, — Collier; Mrs. Todgers, Mrs. Frank Matthews; Mercy, Miss Woolgar; Charity, Miss Pincott. This note appeared on the play-bill:—"This history comprises all his will and his ways—with an historical record of what he did and what he didn't—showing, moreover, who inherited the Family Plate—who came in for the Silver Spoons—and who for the Wooden Ladles."

Dickens, of course, was backed up—according to the custom of the time—by extravaganza and farce, *The Castles of the Seven Passions*, a Romantic, Diabolical,



Mr. and Mrs. Keeley
(in *The Castles of the Seven Passions*).

Celestial, Terrestrial, Legendary Tale of Enchantment, being a fair specimen of its kind in the way of title. The Christmas entertainment of 1844-5 was due to Dickens. *The Chimes*, adapted by Edward Stirling, with Valentine and Orson as an after-piece, ran for thirty-three nights. In the former, Keeley was the Trotty Veck, Mrs. Keeley the Margaret Veck. Dick Whittington then made his appearance on the Lyceum boards, and Martin Chuzzlewit

was revived, the number of performances of this adaptation being thus brought up to one hundred and five. The Whit Monday attraction was Cinderella, and this was supplemented by "36 Danseuses Anglaises!" who were very quaintly "warranted equal to foreign." Mrs. Caudle's



Keeley as Mrs. Caudle.

Curtain Lectures were given, with Keeley as Mrs. Caudle, and Cinderella was acted for more than ninety nights. Indeed, such was the success of the season that "a portion of the stage" was "converted into orchestra stalls." Nevertheless, the management came in for censure in the *Illustrated London News* of August

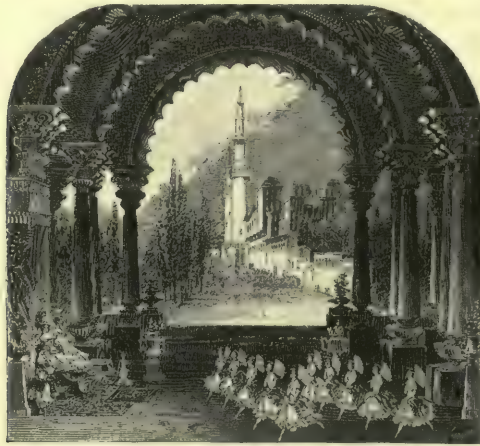
16 in this year: "We wish, in all candour, to allude to the general style and class of pieces produced at this theatre. With the exception of the burlesques, which appear to be its staple support, the majority of plays brought forward are flimsy and unsatisfactory to an extreme degree. There has ever been a want of a good first piece, since this Management commenced its successful career—for such, undoubtedly, it has hitherto been. And we believe that the public now look for something more. The question is, whether they have not a right to expect it, after the patronage they have bestowed upon the establishment. At the beginning of the speculation, whilst it yet remained a mere venture,

this feeling was, of course, different ; but now we need not disguise the fact that the company is a weak one. We do not mean individually, for every member of it is deserving of commendation, but generally—that is to say, it is inefficient as regards the performance of a standard comedy, or a drama of the modern school ; and, since the first season, it has been further weakened by the loss of Miss Fortescue and Miss Woolgar. We admit, there is a dearth of dramatic talent at present ; but still, we think, there are several performers, of good reputation, both ready and willing to join the Lyceum *corps*, were proper overtures made to that effect.”

Dickens was again to the fore on December 20, 1845. On that date, *The Cricket on the Hearth* was brought out, the adaptation being made by Albert Smith “from early proofs of the work by express permission of the author.” The circumstances are thus alluded to by a critic of the time:—“That the Cricket might be served up quite warm to the playgoing public, its author—Mr. Charles Dickens—supplied the dramatist, Mr. Albert Smith, with proof-sheets hot from the press. On the evening of the morning, therefore, on which the book was published, its dramatic version was produced ; and, as the adapter stuck very closely indeed to the text of the original, of course it succeeded.” Sam Emery was the Peerybingle, Keeley the Caleb, and Mrs. Keeley the Mrs. Peerybingle. Miss Mary Keeley made her first appearance on any stage as Bertha. The success of *The Cricket on the Hearth* was such that sixty-one performances were given.

The Lyceum made a brief departure from the high estate to which it had risen under the Keeley management by the introduction of Tom Thumb, the famous dwarf, in

March, 1846, in a sketch written by Albert Smith, entitled *Hop o' my Thumb*. An extravaganza, *Robin Hood*, and Douglas Jerrold's drama, *Nell Gwynne*, in which Mrs. Keeley was the heroine and Keeley the Orange Moll, restored affairs to their normal course. It is interesting to observe, in connection with Jerrold's play, that it intro-



The Ballet in *The Magic Horn*.

duced Dryden's Prologue to *The Conquest of Granada*. It was in this prologue that the original Nell Gwynne—who spoke it in a hat as large as a cart-wheel—convulsed King Charles II. with laughter and captivated the heart of the Merry Monarch. In July, a success was made with a comic drama, *Above and Below*, adapted from the German, in which Keeley, as an idle, good-natured old-clothes dealer, made a hit. During this season—on September 14—the well-known piece, *To Parents and Guardians*, by Tom Taylor, was brought out. There was also played in the

latter month, an extravaganza, by Charles Dance, entitled, *The Magic Horn*, which achieved considerable popularity. At Christmas, *The Battle of Life*, adapted, by the express permission of Dickens, by Albert Smith, was produced,



Albert Smith.

Mrs. Keeley sustaining the part of Clemency Newcome in such a manner that, according to the *Athenaeum*, "she became the life, the soul, the salvation of the new drama." As an after-piece, a pantomime, *The Butterfly's Ball*,

introduced the Lauri Family. In March, 1847, Martin Chuzzlewit was revived once more ; in April, a burlesque, Jenny Lind at Last, pointed to the great singer of the day ; and the Students of Heidelberg anticipated, in locality at any rate, a latter-day stage success. On June 11, this most interesting season—the first in regard to the history of the Lyceum as a theatre untrammelled by the restrictions imposed upon it by the monopoly of the patent houses—came to an end.

Martin Chuzzlewit, Jenny Lind at Last, a parting address spoken by Mrs. Keeley, and Peake's melodrama, the Bottle Imp—with Sam Emery as the Imp—constituted the bill. A summer season by some members of the late company was given, but the Keeley reign at the Lyceum was over.

CHAPTER V

1847-1855

Charles Mathews the younger and Mrs. Mathews (Madame Vestris) begin their eight years' tenure of the Lyceum—Their company—Beverley's scenery—Planché—The Golden Branch—The Merry Wives of Windsor—The King of the Peacocks—The Seven Champions of Christendom—Sims Reeves—The Island of Jewels—The advance of scenery—King Charming—The Queen of the Frogs—A Day of Reckoning—George Henry Lewes—"The Perfection of Acting"—A Game of Speculation—The Prince of Happy Land—A Chain of Events—Lablache as Don Pasquale—The Good Woman in the Wood—Memoir of Madame Vestris—The first appearance (at the Lyceum, in 1822) of Charles Mathews the younger—Copy of the bill.

THE Lyceum now entered upon one of the most interesting chapters in its history—the management of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Mathews (Madame Vestris). It lasted for nearly eight years, and during this time many of the delightful works of J. R. Planché were produced. These fairy plays, charmingly written, admirably acted, and beautifully staged, had long runs, but, after all, adverse circumstances prevailed, and the Vestris management ended in gloom. Let us, however, glance at some of its brightest moments. The season began on October 18, 1847, the theatre being entirely redecorated, and a new

drop curtain being provided by Wm. Beverley, who afterwards painted such exquisite scenery for the Vestris pieces. The company was excellent, as well as extensive. Among the eighteen principal ladies and twenty-one principal men were Madame Vestris, Mrs. Stirling, Miss Fairbrother, Mrs. Leigh Murray, Charles Mathews, J. B. Buckstone, J. P. Harley, Frank Matthews, J. Meadows, Leigh Murray, and Diddear. The ballet-master was Oscar Byrne, who was in the front rank of his profession for many years. The prices of admission were low enough, especially when compared with those of the present day—5s., 4s., 2s., and 1s. The opening play was Planché's comedy, *The Pride of the Market*. This, with *A Rough Diamond*, *Used Up*, *Box and Cox*, and *Patter versus Clatter*, kept the ball rolling until the production of *The Golden Branch* on December 27. Planché was now attached to the theatre as its stock author, and his first work for the Lyceum—founded on Madame D'Aulnoy's story, *Le Rameau d'Or*—was so successful that it ran until March 21, 1848. Madame Vestris, as Amaryllis, was the bright particular star, and a hit was made by Miss Kathleen Fitzwilliam, daughter of the admirable actress of the same name. The scenes in *Arcadia*, designed from the *chef d'œuvres* of Watteau and painted by Wm. Beverley, presented a succession of such fine pictures that they drew praise from Edwin Landseer and other artists and established a record in the history of the English stage. For much of this success, Mr. Beverley, who now appeared for the first time in London in this capacity, was responsible. He had the advantage of being a mechanic of great ingenuity, as well as a fine painter. Another piece of some note produced in March was an adaptation from the French, *Not*

a *Bad Judge*, in which Mathews as Lavater was "the perfection of cool, impressive acting."

The next Planché play was *Theseus and Ariadne* or the



Madame Vestris.

Marriage of Bacchus, performed on April 24. The piece had a most satisfactory reception, but, as related by the author, a melancholy event occurred soon after the first performance, which mitigated the success. This was the

death of Mrs. Anderson, the sister of Madame Vestris. Her part of Theseus "was transferred for a week to Mrs. Leigh Murray, a clever actress in her line, but not a vocalist like Madame Vestris, and the consequence was a serious diminution of attraction. The piece, however, kept its ground satisfactorily, Mathews being delightful as Dædalus, Miss Polly Marshall coming strongly to the fore as Cupid, and Kathleen Fitzwilliam nightly increasing her popularity by her unaffected *naïveté* and charming vocalisation;" Madame Vestris could never again be induced to appear in an Easter piece. There were five scenes in each of the two acts, each one being described on the programme by quotations from Ovid, Virgil, and Chaucer! On May 29, the theatre was closed in consequence of the death of Princess Sophia. In June, The Beggar's Opera was given with Madame Vestris as Lucy Lockit, Miss Fitzwilliam as Polly Peachum, and W. Harrison as Macheath. After the summer recess, a comedy-drama, Court Beauties, by Planché, was played; and in October the name of Miss Fairbrother disappeared from the bills, her place in the company being taken by Mrs. Yates "from the Adelphi Theatre."

Shakespeare was now tried at the Lyceum, The Merry Wives of Windsor being given here, for the first time, in November. Madame Vestris as Mrs. Ford, Mrs. Yates as Mrs. Page, and Mathews as Slender were great favourites, but the feature of the revival was its music. It contained no less than seven songs, including "Blow, blow, thou winter wind," and "I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows," for, according to the happy-go-lucky custom of those days, other pieces were readily laid under contribution for the sake of the general effect.

The Christmas piece was, as a matter of course, a fairy extravaganza. Planché once more went to Madame



Miss Fairbrother
(born 1815, died January 12, 1890).

D'Aulnoy for his inspiration, choosing this time La Princesse Rosette, which he adapted as The King of the

Peacocks. It was brought out on December 26, and it ran for seventy-two nights, "introducing," says Planché, "my old friend, Harley, in the character of a Chinese skipper, and John Reeve, Junr., who had embraced his father's profession, as a May-Fly. Selby, who was a good French-



James Robinson Planché.

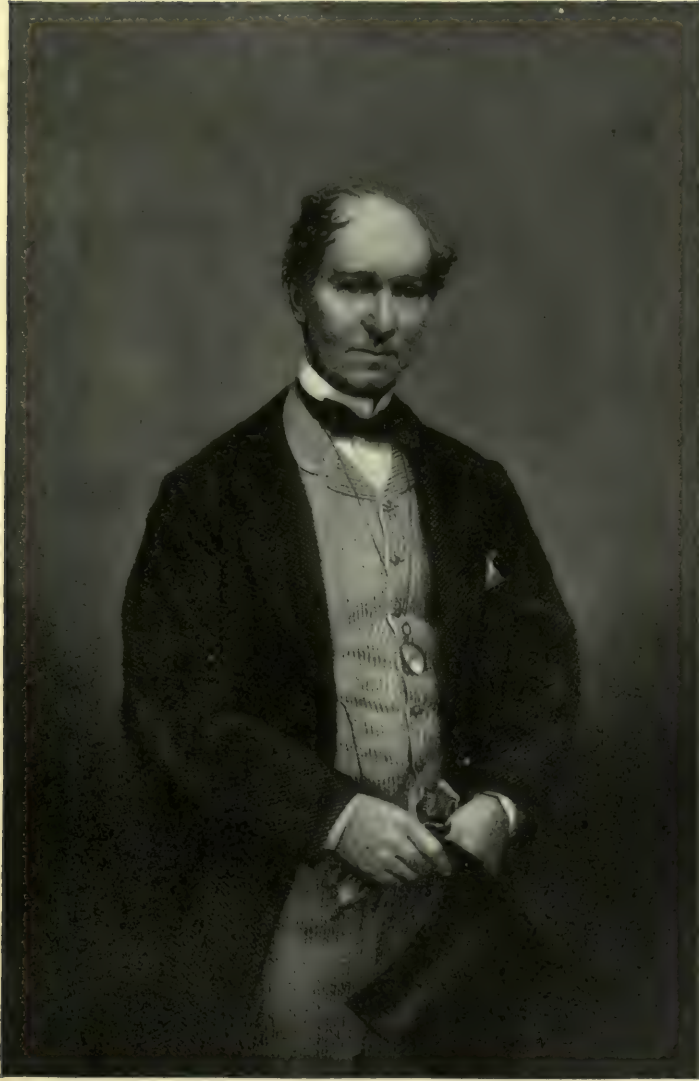
man, was the King's cook, under the transparent name of *Soyez* Tranquille, and was made up to resemble the celebrated *chef* of the Reform Club, who lent him his cap and apron for patterns. Hall was an excellent Irishman, another introduced character, Miss Howard a lovely and lively Rosetta, and young Marshall the drollest dog that

can well be imagined. With Kathleen Fitzwilliam for King Florizel, Mrs. Macnamara for the Governess, and, to crown all, Madame Vestris in what it is now the fashion to call 'the title-*rôle*,' it must have been my fault entirely if the piece had been a failure." As we have seen, it was a great success. The King of the Peacocks, by the way, was revived in 1860, by Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Wigan, on the occasion of the opening of the St. James's Theatre, with Miss Kate Terry as the Princess.

The Easter piece, first acted on April 9, 1849, was announced as "a comic fantastic spectacle." Entitled The Seven Champions of Christendom, its author preferred to describe it as "a dramatic political allegory." It was a *revue*, not of theatrical and other popular novelties of the time, "but of the state of Europe at a critical period, when some of the most momentous events, burning questions, and gravest social grievances were agitating nearly every nation on the Continent, as well as our own. Italy was commencing her life and death struggle for liberty. In recently revolutionised France, liberty had degenerated into license, and for many months tumult, terror, and bloodshed had reigned unchecked in Paris. The trick of the Spanish Marriages had seriously offended our Government, and the expulsion of the British Minister from Madrid, at eight and forty hours' notice, added insult to injury. Germany was throughout in a state of insurrection. In Ireland, chronic discontent was being diligently fostered into disaffection, and a fearful visitation of the potato blight inflicted great distress on the agricultural population. The only bright spot in the political horizon, so far as England was concerned, was the satisfactory establishment of the overland route to India by the indefatigable

exertions of Lieutenant Waghorn." Planché made his Champions of Christendom "really deserving of that glorious title by flinging over their fabulous adventures the veil of allegory, and representing them as attacking and destroying Tyranny, Superstition, Falsehood, Ignorance, and all the plagues of humanity, in the semblance of gigantic ogres, witches, sorcerers, demons, dragons, serpents, and venomous vermin in the original legends, with the weapons with which modern science and 'the march of intellect' had so powerfully armed them." Thus, while preserving for the amusement of the people the familiar features of their old nursery acquaintances, the author gratified his own ambition "by writing a drama with a loftier purpose in the hope of its being appreciated by those who had the best interests of the stage at heart." How this "political allegory" came to be licensed is a mystery, but that it was brilliantly successful is certain. For this result the author was much indebted to the acting and singing of Charles Mathews, and to the attractions of the Seven Champions as represented by a bevy of pretty women headed by Miss Kathleen Fitzwilliam as St. George of England. Beverley's scenery was also greatly admired, the last scene, depicting the pavilions of the Seven Champions, making a profound sensation.

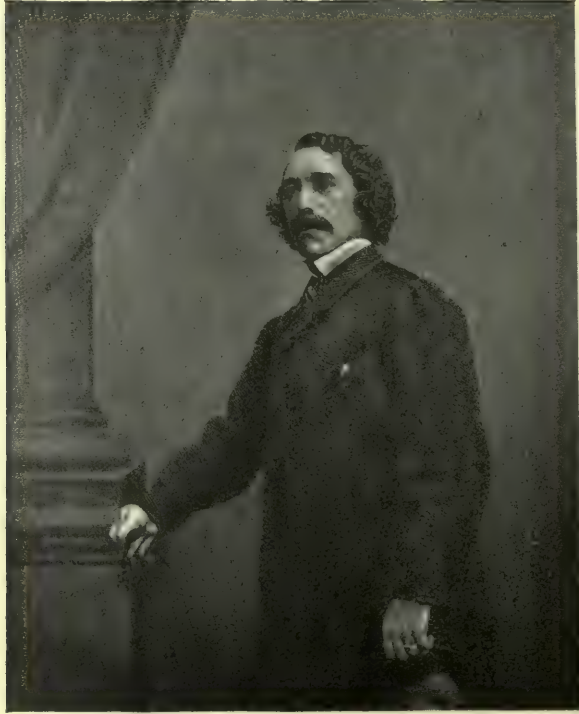
After the Easter piece, came a variety of plays including *The Critic* and James Kenney's farce, *Raising the Wind*, which the Lyceum was to see again some twenty-three years later. At the end of July, a benefit performance of *The Beggar's Opera* introduced Sims Reeves to the Lyceum boards in the character of Captain Macheath. In the interim, three plays by the prolific Planché, two comedy



Charles Mathews the Second.

dramas, Garrick Fever and A Lady in Difficulties, and a vaudeville, Follies of a Night, were given.

The Christmas production was the famous fairy extravaganza, The Island of Jewels, founded on Madame D'Aulnoy's



Sims Reeves.

story, Serpentin Vert. Brought out on December 26, 1849, it ran for one hundred and thirty-five nights—a prodigious length of performances considering that the *matinée* was non-existent. Several important changes in the company

were made as a result of the marriage, and consequent retirement from the stage, of Miss Fitzwilliam and Miss Louisa Howard. The former was replaced by Miss Julia St. George, whose performance of Ariel in *The Tempest*, at Sadler's Wells, had already made her a popular favourite.



Miss Julia St. George
(as Ariel in *The Tempest*).

Another important accession to the company was Mr. Frank Matthews, who played the principal male character in the extravaganza. Madame Vestris was "the lady-in-waiting" on the Princess of Miss Julia St. George. The *Island of Jewels* created a revolution in stage scenery, as

it possessed ample opportunities for distinction in this direction, and Mr. Beverley made the most of them. The circumstances of the case, interesting and important in themselves, are thus related by Planché: "No special tableau for the termination of the piece being suggested in the story, it was left to that gentleman's [Beverley's] taste and ingenuity to design one, and the novel yet exceedingly simple falling of the leaves of a palm tree, discovering six fairies supporting a coronet of jewels, produced such an effect as I scarcely remember having witnessed on any similar occasion up to that period. But, alas! valuable to the management and to the author, as I fully admit it proved on that occasion, it has been the cause of serious injury to the Drama subsequently. Year after year, Mr. Beverley's powers were taxed to outdo his former outdoings. The epidemic spread in all directions. The *last* scene became the *first* in the estimation of the management of every theatre, where harlequinades were indispensable at Christmas. The ingenious method was hit upon of dove-tailing extravaganza and pantomime. A long burlesque, the characters in which have nothing to do with the harlequinade, terminates with one of those elaborate and gorgeous displays which have acquired the name of 'Transformation Scenes.' *They* are the objects of attraction, all the rest is 'inexplicable dumb show and noise.' I have commented on this fatal folly to a considerable extent in my 'Recollections.' I shall therefore only observe here, in support of my assertion, that it has seriously injured the true interests of the drama; that managers, blindly relying on these costly displays for the pecuniary success of their pieces, are perfectly indifferent to the character of the dramas which precede them; while, on the other hand, authors of

well-deserved reputation, finding nothing is considered brilliant but the last scene, naturally become careless in the construction and dialogue of their pieces, and are unfortunately content to profit by 'unprecedented triumphs,' as each production is invariably declared to be, obtained by no merit of their own beyond, it may be, the suggestion of a taking title or subject affording opportunities for the ballet master and the scene painter. Let those who doubt me take the trouble to *read* the early works of our most popular writers of burlesque and extravangaza, and compare them with those they favour the town with at present [1879]. However, 'the whirligig of Time brings its revenges.' The game is evidently nearly played out. Managers are beginning to discover that the '*jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle*.' The occasional failure of a drama on which they have expended a fabulous sum, has had ruinous consequences to them and to their unfortunate companions, and the public, palled by unmeaning spectacles, are gradually discovering that 'the play! the play's the thing.'—So much for prophecy! Costly and elaborate scenery—not always synonymous with beautiful, as in the days of Beverley—has increased in vogue, and the Transformation Scene of the latter half of the last century is preceded by other scenes which are always quite as gorgeous and frequently of far greater importance to the managerial pocket.

The Easter piece, produced on April 1, 1850, was a "lyrical comical pastoral," in one act, Cymon and Iphigenia, "considerably altered from the text of David Garrick, Esq., and particularly adapted to the Lyceum Stage and the occasion." The Esquire, it may be observed, had been dead for over half a century, but the author in 1850, as always,

was very polite. Charles Mathews was the Chorus, "explaining the story and commenting on the various incidents of the piece in his own inimitable style," and Harley, who joined the forces of Charles Kean at the Princess's at the end of the Lyceum season, had an excellent part. A hit was made by Mrs. Humby, who was the best soubrette of her day in the old comedies, and Miss Julia St. George and Mr. Frank Matthews played prominent characters. Miss M. Oliver, who subsequently became a public favourite and was for some time lessee and manageress of the Royalty Theatre, Soho, appeared for the first time at the Lyceum; and, "last though not least" of the attractions, the fine old music of Dr. Arne was restored. In November, there was "a magical, musical entertainment," by John Oxenford, called *The Romance of the Rose*. On December 4, *A Day of Reckoning* was acted, and then, on the 26th of the same month, came another of the fairy extravaganzas for which this management was famous—*King Charming* or the *Blue Bird of Paradise*, which was founded on Madame D'Aulnoy's *L'Oiseau Bleu*. Madame Vestris was the first *King Charming*, but ill-health began to affect her, and she relinquished the part to her husband during a period of two months. The *rôle* was also played by Miss Oliver. I do not recall such another instance as this—a woman playing the *Fairy Prince* first of all, the character then being taken by a man, and finally by an actress again. Mr. and Mrs. Frank Matthews and Miss Julia St. George aided the general success once more. *King Charming* was played continuously for eighty-four nights, and, revived later on in the season, it had a total run of one hundred and ninety-three performances.

The Easter production of 1851 was of special interest

occurring as it did just prior to the opening of the Great Exhibition. King Fulminoso was the last part in extravaganza which Planché wrote for Mathews. The circumstances attending the production of *The Queen of the Frogs*—which ran for forty-one nights—have been agreeably related by Planché in his preface to the piece: “In view of the approaching ‘World’s Fair’ in Hyde Park, the first of the Great International Exhibitions, which was to be opened by Her Majesty and the Prince Consort within a fortnight after Easter Monday, and would overflow London with visitors from every part of the globe, it was reasonably considered that a brilliantly got-up fairy spectacle, which would appeal to the eye rather than to the ear, would be more acceptable to foreigners than a *revue* which must naturally be a running commentary on recent metropolitan events, to which they were utter strangers, and therefore could neither comprehend the allusions to nor take the slightest interest in. The fantastic and most ingeniously constructed story, *La Grenouille Bienfaisante*, by the Comtesse D’Aulnoy, appeared to me to contain all the elements requisite for the purpose. A plot, the interest of which is sustained to the last moment, and is not in the least complicated; a series of startling and exciting events, the action in which required no verbal explanation, and numerous opportunities for scenic display and sumptuous decoration—what more could be desired? The only drawback, as far as I was concerned, was that Madame Vestris, adhering to her resolution of not playing in an Easter piece—why no one could ever discover—it was imperative that Charles Mathews should be a powerful feature in it, and, as he elected to play the King, the task devolved upon me to make the character fit *him*, as he was, with all his talents,

unfitted for the character. I did my best, and so, I am bound to say, did he, and to the satisfaction of the audience. He *rattled* through it, but he could not *act* it. He missed the mock-heroic colouring of the part, as he had years before failed in depicting the chivalric spirit of Riquet with the Tuft. He had no real passion in his nature, and could not even simulate it. He was perfectly aware of it, and nervously avoided in the regular drama any emotional or pathetic passages. As Charles Mathews, he was inimitable. An English nobleman was wont to speak of Mlle. Déjazet, the celebrated French actress (in a complimentary sense), as 'the incarnation of impudence.' Charles Mathews might have been called 'the incarnation of *whim*'—a quality which had all the charm of novelty for an English audience. . . . Natural humour and broad fun were familiar to, and highly relished by, all classes of play-goers; but whim took them by surprise. Nothing like him had ever been seen by them on the English stage previous to his appearance, and it will be long, I believe, before they will 'look upon his like again.'"

Allusion has already been made to the production, on December 4, 1850, of *A Day of Reckoning*. This play proved that Madame Vestris and Mathews could do even better work than they accomplished in the delightful extravaganzas which were penned for them by Planché. Fortunately, there is in existence a criticism on their acting from the pen of George Henry Lewes, which appeared in the *Leader*. The article is headed *The Perfection of Acting*, and, although it is too long to print in full, the following tribute to the chief players is quoted in justice to them: "If you desire to see really perfect acting, rush to the Lyceum and be astonished at the *Day of Reckoning*."

Astonishment elevates your eyebrows at the Lyceum venturing upon a French *drame* instead of its customary farces, comedies, and burlesques—a *drame*, too, prohibited in Paris because of its revolutionary tendency (poor Parisians!) a *drame* presenting the ignoble scenes of the *tapis franc*—a burglary—attempted assassination—scoundrelism of various kinds—and, finally, a bloody duel, cutting short the existence of—Charles Mathews of all persons in the world!—a *drame* contrasting the *blouse* and the frock



Scene from A Day of Reckoning.

coat—the rich and the poor—the law's injustice and the villany of the great ;—a *drame* which, in its original shape, L'Enfant de Paris, excited the invective of Jules Janin through twelve columns to the virtuous indignation of its author, Emile Souvestre, who protested his *drame* was perfectly moral ;—well, this *drame* you find altered from five acts to three, and otherwise improved by the accomplished Planché, and presented to a thrilled Lyceum audience ! Having recovered your astonishment at this venture

and its perfect success, having been astonished at the *mise en scène* (but you are accustomed to that in this theatre)—the lasting astonishment is that Vestris should perform a pathetic, noble woman, and perform it as no actress on our stage could do it! *That* is something to marvel at. Vestris, the greatest pet of the public, will startle even her greatest admirers in this part; for, assuredly, no one ever believed her powers lay at all in that direction. Yet I assure you her acting is quite a study. My readers have learned by this time that I am not a very great admirer of modern acting; and if, when I do admire, I express myself enthusiastically, yet I am not easily roused to enthusiasm; and I declare to them that the acting of Vestris and Charles Mathews in the new piece gave me more unmixed delight—more exquisite enjoyment—than I have for a long while received from the English stage. All the freshness of early enjoyment came back upon me, and no boy ever realised his first play more!

“The secret of all this? Nothing can be simpler. Vestris and Charles Mathews were *natural*—nothing more, nothing less. They were a lady and gentleman such as we meet with in drawing-rooms, graceful, quiet, well-bred, perfectly dressed, perfectly oblivious of the footlights. He is a polished villain—a D’Orsay without conscience, and without any of the scowlings, stampings, or intonations of the approved stage villain. There are scoundrels in high life—but they are perfectly well-bred. Whatever faults there may be in their conduct, their deportment is irreproachable. This is the villain represented by Charles Mathews—a man of fashion, reckless, extravagant, heartless, but perfectly unconscious of his being worse than his neighbours. Those who are familiar with his *Used Up* will understand how he

represents the quiet elegance of the part ; but they must see him in this to appreciate his refined villany, cool self-possession, and gentlemanly devilishness. In every detail of his dress, in every gesture, and in every look, I recognised an artist representing Nature. It is, of course, a higher thing to play Othello or Macbeth, and I do not



George Henry Lewes.

wish to exaggerate the importance of this part ; but I say that in this part he plays *to perfection* : a Teniers may not be a Raphael, but it is worth a hundred ambitious attempts at Raphael."

A Day of Reckoning, to the credit of the public be it said, was played forty-four times during its first season. Lewes, whose criticism has just been quoted, adapted, during the next year, Balzac's Mercadet le Faiseur for the Lyceum. It was produced on October 2, 1851, under the

title of *A Game of Speculation*, and in the character of Mr. Affable Hawk it provided Mathews with a part in which he became as noted as in Sir Charles Coldstream in *Used Up*. The character is that of a distressed and scheming speculator. Mathews played it with that mode-



Charles Mathews
(in *A Game of Speculation*).

ration and air of naturalness which marked all that he did. The careless manner with which he extracted money from a domestic and the bland superiority with which he defended this meanness to his wife—on the plea that fortune at times depends upon trifles—in the look of conviction with which he hoodwinked a rapacious person, and in the assumed hauteur with which he baffled the coarse, but cunning, Grossmark—there was not, according to Dr. Westland Marston, “a tone, look, or gesture which might not

have been employed by a City man of the time. The curt, business-like manner, contrasting with his usual placidity, in which he dispels the last suspicions of a creditor by threatening to *pay* him—that is, to close accounts—was a triumph of unscrupulous ingenuity. The

veriest admirer of Charles Mathews could scarcely have credited him with the gift of pathos ; but, in this particular part, his reluctance to use the money of the humble clerk who loves his daughter, was almost affecting, and so humanising was his touch of unselfishness, that it made one too indulgent to the swindler. On the other hand, hypocrisy has seldom been so skilfully masked. The colloquial ease and absence of strain in the various stratagems made them to the last degree plausible, while his changes of expression, and certain familiar, everyday actions, gave life and point to the dialogue. A finger inserted in a waistcoat pocket, the deprecatory movement of an arm, or the flourish of a handkerchief, gave with him as much emphasis in comedy as the heroic gesture of serious actors have given in tragedy. He painted nature, indeed, in his own way, as truly as did the most poetical actors ; but it was the artificial nature of society." Lewes, it should be added, called himself "Slingsby Lawrence" when his work led him from the critical field to that of the play adaptor.

The run of *A Game of Speculation* was interfered with by the Christmas production, the usual two-act fairy extravaganza. This was acted on December 26, 1851, being called *The Prince of Happy Land or the Fawn in the Forest*, an adaptation from *La Biche au Bois* of Madame D'Aulnoy. The Prince was Miss Julia St. George, and Madame Vestris played a lady-in-waiting. Mathews did not appear in it. Other versions of the same story were produced in London—one, at Drury Lane, in 1845, by J. Maddison Morton, called *The Princess who was Changed into a Deer*, and the other, by Sir (then Mr.) F. C. Burnand, called *The White Fawn*, at the Holborn Theatre (subse-

quently the Duke's, and long since pulled down), in 1868. Planché's version ran for seventy-nine nights at the Lyceum. A Game of Speculation was restored to the bills early in the year 1852, ninety-five performances being given during the season.

An entire change in the class of the Easter entertainment took place this year, extravaganza and parody giving way to drama. This was A Chain of Events, an adaptation from Les Dames de la Halle. It was considered so important by the management that it occupied the only place in the bill. This faith was amply justified, for the play was acted for sixty-one times. There were no less than twenty-eight characters in it, the principal ones being interpreted by Madame Vestris, Miss Julia St. George, Miss Foote, Miss Laura Keane, Frank Matthews, H. Belton, and Charles Mathews. It was brought out anonymously; but the names of "Slingsby Lawrence" and Charles Mathews soon appeared as the authors, or, to be correct, the adaptors. A great feature was made of the beautiful scenery by Beverley.

An "Immense Attraction for the Million" was offered on August 13, on the occasion of the benefit of Augustus Harris (father of Sir Augustus Harris), who was then the stage-manager of Her Majesty's Theatre. Lablache sang the rôle of Don Pasquale in Donizetti's opera, and Balfe was the conductor. With October, came a revival of The Golden Fleece or Jason in Colchis and Medea in Corinth, a classical extravaganza by Planché, which was originally produced at the Haymarket Theatre on March 24, 1845, with Madame Vestris as Medea and Charles Mathews as the Chorus. Then came revivals of A Chain of Events and A Game of Speculation, which occupied the house until

December 27, 1852, when another of the Planché extravaganzas was brought out. This was *The Good Woman in the Wood*, founded on an amusing story by Mlle. de la Force, *La Bonne Femme*. "Time had begun to tell upon Madame Vestris, who had entered her fifty-sixth year," wrote Planché, "and with that good taste which never deserted her, felt that what are professionally termed 'breeches parts' upon a rather *lucus a non lucendo* principle, were no longer *be-fitting* a lady of her age. When not personating a fairy prince, or the young hero of the story, she had latterly played the waiting-maid of the heroine; but in *La Bonne Femme* I saw a character in every respect suited to her appearance, style, and capacity. She, fortunately, took the same view of it, and was certainly the most perfect Good Woman in the Wood that the ingenious authoress of the fairy tale could have herself imagined. The young Princes and Princesses found adequate representatives in Miss Eglinton and Miss Julia St. George, Miss Wyndham, and Miss Agnes Robertson (now Mrs. Dion Boucicault), who, as Princess Sylvia, *alias* Lirette, was a fascinating *ingénue*, and gave early promise of the reputation she so deservedly enjoys as one of the most natural actresses that have ever adorned the English stage." The chief part in the scenery was, as usual, due to Beverley. *The Good Woman in the Wood*, which ran for sixty-five nights, was followed, in April, 1853, by a revival of *Used Up*—Mathews' own adaptation of *L'Homme Blasé*, first acted in 1845; and there is nothing of importance to chronicle until December 26 of this year, when the last of the Planché extravaganzas at the Lyceum was acted.

Bearing the lengthy title of *Once Upon a Time There Were Two Kings*, it was founded on Madame D'Aulnoy's

replace an old member of the company proved a disappointment and had to be withdrawn. Nevertheless, the excellent acting of Frank Matthews, James Bland, Miss Julia St. George, and Madame Vestris carried the piece to success, and it had a run of seventy-nine nights. In August, a short season of opera introduced Sims Reeves in various characters—Thaddeus in the *Bohemian Girl*, Elvino in *La Sonnambula*, Edgar of Ravenswood in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and Tom Tug in *The Waterman*. At Christmas, there was a burlesque, *Prince Prettypet and the Butterfly*, by William Brough, in which Mr. Lionel Brough, brother of the author, made his first stage appearance. On March 24, 1855, Charles Mathews issued an address to the public. He urged "the long and serious illness of Mrs. Mathews" as an excuse for the lack of patronage from which the theatre had lately suffered, and there is a pathetic note in the statement that Mr. Mathews would be "most unjust to his brother artistes, whose friendship and cordiality have supported and cheered him through all his difficulties, were he to further trifle with their prospects." He therefore "bids adieu to the cares of management at once, and for ever!" In commenting on the failure, the *Illustrated London News* gave the ignoring by the management of "the taste of the people for the stern beauties of our old drama" as a strong reason for the want of permanent success: "We can only attribute the ultimate failure of Mr. C. Mathews' conduct of the Lyceum to his neglect of this tendency," it said. "It has been long clear to us that this theatre, notwithstanding his admirable acting, could not be supported by the light pieces which held exclusive possession of his stage. The interest of most of them besides was alien to the spirit of

English domestic life, and too obviously betrayed their foreign origin. Whoever shall hereafter take the Lyceum must provide more satisfactory food for the educated public of the day. The favourable situation of this edifice should command the best company and best drama of the land; and would enable a competent management to do more than ever was attempted by the patent theatres in the most prosperous eras. But we are told that the rent is excessive. This is an evil difficult of immediate cure; nevertheless, it must yield, however late, to the necessity of justice—which, like truth, always prevails in the end."

Madame Vestris, who had been taken ill during the run of the Christmas piece of 1853-4, did not survive this announcement very long. She died on August 8, 1856, "since which period," wrote Planché, in 1879, "no one has ever appeared possessing that peculiar combination of personal attractions, professional ability, and refined taste, which for so many years made her the most popular actress and manageress of her day." This remarkable woman, Eliza Lucy Bartolozzi, the grand-daughter of the celebrated engraver, was born on January 3, 1797, in St. Marylebone. She was conversant with French and Italian, and was a thorough musician. At the age of sixteen, she had the misfortune to marry Armand Vestris, the last of the dancers of that name who, although he was only eight years her senior, had already ruined his constitution by dissipation. The marriage took place at St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, on January 28, 1813. Madame Vestris made her *début* at the King's Theatre, on July 20, 1815, as Proserpina in Peter von Winter's long-forgotten opera, *Il Ratto di Proserpina*. She then appeared in Paris, in comedy and tragedy. She was a woman who, without

being regularly beautiful, fascinated by her engaging expression and her manner of taking the audience into her confidence. She "possessed lustrous eyes, a flexible mouth, somewhat open, and a forehead arched by abundant dark hair that fell in thick tresses upon her well-formed neck and sloping shoulders, while the general grace of her person and bearing was worthy the possessor of such a countenance. In her rich contralto voice, she had sung *Cherry Ripe* and other ballads so ravishingly as to make them town talk. As *Don Giovanni* in *Don Giovanni* in London, as *Captain Macheath*, as *Apollo* in *Midas*, as well as in the characters of *Lydia Languish* and *Letitia Hardy*, and in various burlettas at the *Olympic*, she was confessedly irresistible. Her voice in a ballad has great expression, and to use *Leigh Hunt's* words, 'all the ripeness of the South in it.' She was charmingly arch and vivacious, with a happy carelessness which helped effect, with an occasional air of playful *mutinerie* that increased public favour by her evident consciousness of it. Let it be added that she never failed to give her personal attraction the advantage of rich and tasteful costume, and that she was such a votary of elegance in dress, that she would display it in rustic or humble characters." So wrote *Dr. Westland Marston*, who had the advantage of seeing her when she was at the zenith of her fame.

Armand Vestris died in 1825, and his widow married, on July 18, 1838, *Charles James Mathews*, but she was always known to the public as *Madame Vestris*. Mr. and Mrs. Mathews visited the United States, but without success, immediately after their marriage. Their management of the *Olympic*—which had been begun by *Madame Vestris* in 1831—terminated in 1839. They then entered

into the management of Covent Garden Theatre, during the three years of which they produced *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, in which Madame Vestris represented Oberon with great success from the public point of view, "if not with all the appreciation of the text that might have been desired." Engagements with Macready at Drury Lane and with Benjamin Webster at the Haymarket, followed. Then came the Lyceum *régime*. Madame Vestris made her last appearance on the stage in that pathetic little play, *Sunshine Through the Clouds*, an adaptation of *La Joie fait Peur*, which was produced at the Lyceum on June 15, 1854. She was buried in Kensal Green Cemetery.

Charles James Mathews (1803-1878) was the son of the celebrated Charles Mathews whose *At Homes* were such a brilliant success at the Lyceum in the early part of the nineteenth century. Although he was educated as an architect, he preferred the stage as a means of livelihood. He made his first professional appearance, at the Olympic Theatre, in December, 1835, and he acted until within a few days of his death, although in 1855, as we have seen, he bade adieu to management "at once and for ever." In the year following the death of Madame Vestris, he married Mrs. Lizzie Davenport, an American actress. Dr. Westland Marston, who had seen Mathews at the Olympic in 1835, met him for the last time at a theatrical supper given by Mr. H. L. Bateman, in Albemarle Street. "The gay comedian, the cause of so much gaiety to others, though smiling and agreeable, seemed silent and thoughtful. For myself, I recalled pensively the dim resemblance between the sharp and time-worn outline of the face before me, and that flushed

with spirits and success which I had seen on the night of his *début*."

Although Charles James Mathews did not make his first public appearance until 1835, he had played successfully as an amateur thirteen years previously, and before a crowded house. As the theatre in which the experiment was made was that with which this history is concerned, the particulars should be recorded here. Arnold, the manager, had granted young Mathews the use of the house for the amusement of the youth and his friends. The excitement created by the announcement of the performance was extraordinary, and the entertainment proved far above the usual level of amateurish efforts. The programme, and a handbill in reference to an accident which had befallen the hero of the evening, were as follows:

Theatre Royal, English Opera House, Strand.

Particularly private.

This present Friday, April 26, 1822, will be presented a farce, called

MR. H——.

N.B.—This piece was *damned* at Drury Lane Theatre.

Mr. H——, Captain Hill.

Landlord, Mr. Gyles.

Belvil, Mr. C. Byrne.

Melesinda, Mrs. Edwin.

Betty, Mrs. Bryan.

Previous to which a Prologue will be spoken by Mrs. Edwin.

After the farce (for the first time in this country, and now performing with immense success in Paris) a French Petite Comedie, called

LE COMEDIEN D'ETAMPES.

(N.B.—This piece was never acted in London, and may very probably be *damned here*.)

Dorival (le comedien), M. Perlet. (Positively for this night only, as he is engaged to play the same part at Paris to-morrow evening.)

M. Maclou de Beaubuisson, Mr. J. D'Egville.

M. Dupré, M. Giubilei.

Baptiste, Mr. W. Peake.

M. Corbin, Mr. Oscar Byrne.

Madeline, Madame Spittallier.

Immediately after which, A Lover's Confession, in the shape of a song, by M. Emile (from the Théâtre de la Porte St. Martin, at Paris.)

To conclude with a Pathetic Drama, in one Act, called

THE SORROWS OF WERTHER.

(N.B.—This piece was damned at Covent Theatre.)

Werther, Mr. C. J. Mathews.

Schmidt (his friend) Mr. J. D'Egville.

Albert, Mr. Gyles.

Fritz (Werther's servant), Mr. R. B. Peake.

Snaps (Albert's servant), Mr. W. Peake.

Charlotte, Mrs. Mathews.

Brothers and Sisters of Charlotte, by six little cherubims engaged for the occasion.

ORCHESTRA :—Leader of the band, Mr. Knight ; Conductor, Mr. E. Knight ; Pianoforte, Mr. Knight, Jun. ; Harpsichord, Master Knight (that was) ; Clavecin by the Father of the Knights to come.

Vivat Rex !—No money returned (because none will be taken).

. On account of the above surprising novelty not an order can possibly be admitted ; but it is requested, that if such a thing finds its way into the front of the house, it will be kept.

Theatre Royal, English Opera House, Strand.

Friday, April 26th, 1822.

The ladies and gentlemen who have honoured the theatre with a visit, are most respectfully informed that Mrs. Edwin has been very suddenly and seriously indisposed. In this emergency, Mrs. J. Weippart (formerly Miss I. Stevenson), of this theatre, has kindly undertaken the part of Melesinda, in the farce called Mr. H—. The Prologue, intended to have been recited by Mrs. Edwin, will be read by Mr. H— himself ; who solicits the customary indulgence.

As a conclusion to this complicated apology, it is with sorrow announced, that M. Perlet, M. Emile, and Mr. C. J. Mathews, have had

the misfortune of falling from *their* horse and have sprained *their* right ankle ; but it is anxiously hoped, that as the actors intend *to put their best leg forward*, the performance will not be considered a lame one.

The "M. Perlet," be it observed, was young Mathews, who was also the "M. Emile" of the bill. It was said that "Elia" was among the audience, but, whether this was so or not, additional interest is lent to the occasion by the fact that this was the first representation of Charles Lamb's play since its fierce reception at Drury Lane on December 10, 1806.

CHAPTER VI

1856-1858

Italian opera—Changes in the theatre—Stalls—Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort present—Sims Reeves—The Wizard of the North—Adelaide Ristori makes her first appearance in London at the Lyceum—Charles Dillon assumes the management—Marie Wilton (Lady Bancroft) makes her London *début*—John Lawrence Toole—A Life's Ransom—Don Cæsar de Bazan—Virginius—Hamlet—Opera and farce—Production of The Rose of Castille—A Hard Struggle—Dickens's opinion of Dillon—Helen Faucit as Lady Macbeth—The Birthplace of Podgers—The African Roscius—Extremes—Mr. and Mrs. Keeley again—The Brough family.

THE next phase in this strange, eventful history is Italian Opera at the Lyceum. On March 4, 1856, the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, which then, as now, was mainly used as an Opera House, was burned down after a masquerade ball which was given under the auspices of that clever showman, juggler, and amateur actor, Professor Anderson, the Wizard of the North. The Lyceum once more provided shelter for a burnt-out company. In order to accommodate the opera audience and the better to realise the new standard now set up, the interior of the theatre was repainted in pale blue, white, and gold, from top to bottom, "the ceiling excepted, which, however, has been

washed to such purpose that the cupids and other mythological personages of that imaginary heaven assume a dim and shadowy appearance. A new and elegant chandelier now hangs from the centre of the roof, and lights up the theatre without the aid of any other gas appliances. The number of private boxes has been augmented to sixty-eight. In addition to the grand tier, and a tier above, eight small boxes are continued on a level with the gallery, besides a row on each side of the pit. The gallery is divided, as it was at Covent Garden, into what may be entitled 'amphitheatre stalls' and gallery proper, separated by a wooden partition. The pit is nearly all distributed into stalls. Of these exclusive conveniences, there are no less than two hundred and ten. The only access to them is through a straight passage, which cuts the pit into two halves. Circulation round the area is therefore impossible, the means of ingress and egress being alone provided. The boxes are hung with dark red curtains, and papered with the same colour, which has a gloomy effect. The chairs in the pit stalls are furnished with red seats and white backs. What is called the pit, is limited to two or three rows at the back, these and the gallery being the only unreserved seats in the house. The orchestra—though reduced to about fifty performers—appears to occupy more room, in comparison, than at Covent Garden. The diminution is made in the stringed instruments, the wind instruments necessarily remaining as before."

From this contemporary account, it appears that stalls—pit-stalls, and then orchestra-stalls as they came to be known—were brought into use for the first time at the Lyceum. The entrance thereto was from Wellington-street. The Royal box was occupied on the opening

night—April, 1856—by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. It is recorded with a tone of satisfaction that “there was only a single *contretemps* during the evening. This occurred in the third act, when the ‘drop’ descended suddenly and unexpectedly between the first and second verses of Signor Tamberlik’s most spirited aria, shutting out scene and actors from view, which raised a hearty laugh from Her Majesty’s box and a good-humoured cheer from the audience. At the end of the opera ‘God Save the Queen’ was performed by the entire company, Mademoiselle Maria, Herr Formes, and Mademoiselle Jenny Ney singing the solo verses.” These lady singers are unknown to fame, but Herr Formes was Karl Joseph of that name, the celebrated bass opera and concert-singer (1810–1889), who made his first appearance in London in 1849. During this season, Sims Reeves sang the rôle of Fra Diavolo. “Professor” Anderson, who thus was the indirect cause of the Italian opera season at the Lyceum in 1856, which lasted until August, had a personal experience of this stage in December, 1855, when he gave his conjuring entertainment at the Lyceum.

Italian opera, however, did not monopolise the entire summer at the Lyceum, for on June 4, although the language of Italy was still heard on the stage of this theatre, it was in tragedy. The occasion was the London *début* of Madame Ristori, who was then touring Europe for the first time. Her opening piece was the *Medea* of Eugène Scribe and Ernest Legouvé, which the celebrated Italian actress had produced in Paris, at the Salle Ventadour, on April 8 of the same year. The English public greeted Madame Ristori with great warmth, and, in July, she played other characters at the Lyceum. These

were: Pia de' Tolomei, in a tragedy inspired by the immortal verse of Dante; Rosmonda, in Rucellai's tragedy; Francesca da Rimini, in the tragedy of that name by Silvio Pellico; and the young wife in a one-act



Adelaide Ristori.

comedy called *I Gelosi Fortunati*. Madame Ristori reappeared at the Lyceum in 1857, making a particular success as Camma in Giuseppe Montanelli's tragedy of that name.

An eventful season began on September 15, 1856. On that date, Charles Dillon assumed the management, and Miss Marie Wilton (Lady Bancroft) made her first appearance on the London stage, while John Lawrence Toole migrated from the St. James's Theatre to the Lyceum. Dillon, who was born in 1819 and died in 1881, made his metropolitan *début* at Sadler's Wells Theatre as Belphegor five months before opening at the Lyceum in the same part. The play of Belphegor had already become popular in London by reason of the acting of Frédéric Lemaître and from a long run which it had enjoyed at the Adelphi. The character gave Dillon ample opportunity for the display of that rugged pathos in which he was at his best. Mr. Toole took the comic part of Fanfarronde, and Miss Wilton was the boy, Henri. The young actress had played with Dillon in Bristol, and her London engagement followed. The pleasant picture of this important event in her career is admirably related by Lady Bancroft:

"At last the opening night arrived. The house was crammed; and when Mr. Dillon as Belphegor, Mrs. Dillon as Madeline, his wife, with a little girl in the cart, Toole at the back of it beating a drum, and I seated like a boy on the horse, came on to the stage, there was a tremendous reception—such cheering, of course, for Mr. Dillon, the rest of us being more or less unknown. I had little or nothing to say on my first appearance; but the supper scene which followed went off wonderfully well, Toole making the people scream with laughter, and becoming a great success before he had been many minutes on the stage. At the end of the act, where my best scene occurred with Mr. Dillon, the applause was tremendous, and there was a great call. I waited, hoping and expecting to be taken before the curtain by Mr. Dillon; but my friend the stage-manager turned round to me sharply, saying, 'Now then, Miss Wilton, go to your room; you are not wanted.' I walked slowly away towards the dressing-rooms; Mr. Dillon came off. I listened.

"Another loud call; he went on again and again, each time alone.

I reached my room, where my mother was anxiously waiting to know how I had succeeded, and, determined not to let her see how distressed I was, I laughed and said, 'All right, mother ; it has gone beautifully.' 'Were you called before the curtain?' she asked. I was on the point of replying, when the call-boy came running along the corridor shouting, 'Miss Wilton! Miss Wilton—make haste! Mr. Dillon says you must go on before the curtain.' Away I went, almost on wings, in case I should be too late, and heard the welcome sound from the public : 'Miss Wilton! Miss Wilton!' I went on *alone*—my little figure on that big stage, with no one by my side, and no one's hand to help me. The audience called me a second time, and as I was about to answer it my dear stage-manager pulled me back, saying, 'That will do ; we shall never get the piece over if this is allowed to go on.' I ran to my room, threw my arms round my mother's neck, and said, 'A great success, mother ; kiss me!' When the play was over, Mr. and Mrs. Dillon patted me on the head approvingly, and said how pleased they were.

* * * * *

"The following encouraging words from the *Morning Post*, it may be guessed, were highly valued by me : 'Miss M. Wilton is a young (apparently *very* young) lady quite new to us, but her natural and pathetic acting as Henri, the son of Belphegor, showed her to possess powers of no ordinary character, which fully entitled her to the recalls she obtained at the end of the second act. She appeared also as Perdita, the Royal Milkmaid, and made still further inroads in the favour of the audience ; indeed, anything more dangerous to throw in the way of a juvenile prince it were difficult to imagine. She is a charming *débutante*, who hails from Bristol. She sings prettily, acts archly, dances gracefully, and is withal of a most bewitching presence.'"

The burlesque which followed the principal piece of the evening was entitled *Perdita or the Royal Milkmaid*. The author thereof, William Brough, made his first appearance on any stage as Polyxenes, Mrs. Alfred Mellon was the Florizel, Miss Marie Wilton the Perdita, and Mr. Toole the Autolycus. Belphegor was supplemented on October 16 by *The King's Musketeers*, both plays being given on

one evening, a bill of fare which would astonish the modern actor. The adaptation of *Les Trois Mousquetaires* demanded the united energies of a trio of adapters—Dillon, Charles Rice, and Augustus Harris the first. It was received most favourably, and the *Times* went into



Marie Wilton (Lady Bancroft)

ecstasies over the D'Artagnan of Charles Dillon. On November 10, Dillon appeared as Claude Melnotte, and, on December 1, as Othello. In the latter month, he was also seen as William Tell, and as Raoul in Edmund Falconer's drama, *The Cagot*, or *Heart for Heart*. The play was in blank verse and did not last long. The farce acted

in conjunction with *The Cagot* was *The Dead Shot*, with J. L. Toole as Hector Timid. A special attraction of the bill was found in "ten Bedouin Arabs." On December 22, Miss Woolgar appeared in *As You Like It*, for her benefit, Miss Wilton being the Phebe. The Christmas entertain-



John Lawrence Toole.

ment was William Brough's burlesque, *Conrad and Medora*, acted by Miss Woolgar, Mrs. Dillon, Mrs. Buckingham White, Miss Wilton, Mr. Toole, and others. A return was made to drama proper on February 16, 1857, when Dillon acted *Lord Revesdale* in the first performance of Dr. Westland Marston's drama, *A Life's Ransom*. Don Cæsar

de Bazan and Virginius followed, and, on March 27, came



Charles Dillon as Othello.

Hamlet, in which the First Gravedigger was admirably represented by Mr. Toole. Dillon then acted Alfred

Evelyn in Money, and his first season—a worthy and satisfactory one in all respects—ended, on April 2, with Richelieu and Belphegor.

Miss Wilton played in a farce, by Edmund Yates, a small part called Lemondrop. The author gave her “kindly praise, and said it was a *sweet* performance although a lemon-drop,” and prophesied a bright career for the actress. Miss Wilton found much encouragement in these early days in the kindly nature of Mr. Toole and in the help, in her songs, of a musical friend. In the burlesque of Conrad and Medora, in which she appeared as Serena, the little fairy at the bottom of the sea, she had not much to do, but a big opportunity came soon after Virginius was produced: “When it had been played a few nights, Mrs. Dillon, who played Virginia, was taken ill, and I was told that I must take up the part. I sat up to a late hour working at it, and got through it tolerably well. Mr. Dillon was pleased with me, and said, ‘You must study parts like this; you have a pretty, natural style of acting, and I should one day like to see you play Juliet.’ I told him I had played it when I was quite a child; and he replied, ‘Oh! those are exhibitions I would rather not witness; I am glad I was not present.’ I didn’t like this remark at the time, but I have often thought since how right he was.” From the Lyceum, Marie Wilton went to the Haymarket and Adelphi theatres.

In August, the boards which had recently welcomed Shakespeare were desecrated by the reappearance of The Wizard of the North. On September 21, however, another and more commendable form of entertainment took possession of the Lyceum. This was the commence-

ment of an opera season, under the direction of Louisa Pyne and W. Harrison, with Crown Diamonds. The Huguenots, Norma, Maritana, and Il Trovatore succeeded Auber's opera. It is interesting to note that the opera was followed in those days by a farce. The gloom of The Huguenots was lightened by the humour of A Rough Diamond (George Honey being the Cousin Joe), and the sadness of Il Trovatore was succeeded by the boisterous mirth of Good for Nothing. On October 29 of this year—1857—an important event occurred. This was the first performance of The Rose of Castille (the libretto of which was by Augustus Harris the elder and Edmund Falconer). Balfe's opera was a great success, thirty-eight performances being given. The prices of the stalls at this time were six shillings, the dress-circle being five shillings, the pit two, and the gallery one shilling.

Charles Dillon again rented the theatre in 1858, and produced, on January 20, Leigh Hunt's drama, Love's Amazements, in which he played the part of Captain de la Rousse. He had, however, begun his season on January 1 with Richelieu and a burlesque on the subject of Lalla Rookh. On February 1, came a new play, by Dr. Westland Marston, A Hard Struggle, in which Dillon won the admiration of Charles Dickens, who wrote to the author of the play: "I have witnessed twice the representation of your charming little piece, A Hard Struggle. . . . You ask me what I think of Charles Dillon as an actor. His representation of Reuben Holt was exactly what acting should be—Nature itself. I can't call to mind any living actor who could have played it so well. So closely did I watch him on both occasions that I could only discover one slight defect: on receipt of the letter from his love

announcing the arrival of Lilian, in his emotion he crumpled the paper in his hand. I think it would have been more consistent had he folded the letter carefully and placed it in his breast." During the same month, Dillon played Rover in *Wild Oats*, and Iago to the Othello of one Roberts, "the American tragedian."

An interesting appearance at the Lyceum was that of Helen Faucit who, on February 18, played Lady Macbeth—a character in which she was almost new to London—to the Macbeth of Dillon. In March, Miss Faucit acted Beatrice to the Benedick of Dillon. On March 22, Dillon made his last appearance at this theatre in a new character—so far as London was concerned—Louis XI., on the occasion of a complimentary benefit given by the company to himself and Mrs. Dillon. In that month, Mr. Toole played in four pieces, for his own benefit. One of these plays was *The Birthplace of Podgers*, subsequently made known, by Mr. Toole's impersonation of Tom Crankey, all over the English-speaking stage. A summer season, which possessed some curious features, began on July 17, with an English version of *La Dame aux Camélias*, the heroine being played by Mrs. Charles Young. A burlesque, *The Lancashire Witches*, or the Knight and the Giants, with Mrs. Howard Paul as Sir Launcelot de Lake, followed the serious fare of the evening. On July 24, "*The African Roscius*" appeared as Othello. The coloured tragedian, I may note, was born in 1804, and died in 1867. He was the son of a Senegal chief and gave up the pulpit for the stage. New York would not receive him at first, on account of his colour, but London was not so fastidious. He made his *début* here in 1833, at the Victoria Theatre over the water, and, on April 10 of the same year, played Othello at

Covent Garden to the Desdemona of Ellen Tree. He was a great favourite on the continent, and the Emperor of Russia decorated him. His last appearance in London



Miss Helen Faucit (Lady Theodore Martin.)

was at the Haymarket in August, 1865, his Othello being supported by the Iago of Walter Montgomery, the Cassio of James Fernandez, and the Desdemona of Madge Robertson (Mrs. Kendal).

To return, however, to the Lyceum. Ira Aldridge in Othello gave place to Mrs. Young in *The Love Chase* and to Leigh Murray as John Mildmay in *Still Waters Run Deep*, and as Claude Melnotte in *The Lady of Lyons*,



Ira Aldridge (as Aaron in *Titus Andronicus*).

in August. On the 25th of this month, Edmund Falconer produced his comedy, *Extremes*, here. The following curious statement appeared on the bill of the first night: "Mr. Leigh Murray having absented himself from the rehearsals of the new comedy, and to avoid a breach of faith

with the public as regards its production, Mr. Edmund Falconer is compelled to undertake the part originally cast to, and accepted by, the former gentleman." During the fifth week of the run, Leigh Murray appeared in the piece, which was played for nine weeks in succession. On October 23, the author-actor had a benefit, when Mr. and Mrs.



Leigh Murray.

Keeley acted in *Betsy Baker*, the Lauri Family appeared in *The Rendezvous*, and *Extremes* was played for the fiftieth time.

On January 3, 1859, Falconer appeared as Cardinal Richelieu in *Marion de l'Orme*, a play translated by him from the French. On March 31, he produced another drama, *Francesca*, a *Dream of Venice*, Mrs. Charles Young, Gaston Murray, and H. Vandenhoff being in the

cast, in addition to the author-actor. Another appearance, of interest to a wide circle of playgoers, was that of Mr. Lionel Brough. This admirable comedian, as we have already seen, had made his theatrical *début* at the Lyceum, under the Vestris and Mathews management, in 1854. On the death of Madame Vestris, he left the stage for a



Robert Barnabas Brough.

time, but he returned to the Lyceum in 1858, under the Falconer management, and at Christmas in that year played here, under the guise of Lionel Porter, in *The Siege of Troy*, a burlesque by his brother, Robert Brough, in which Mrs. Keeley was the Hector. Others in the cast were Charles Young, James Rogers, Julia St. George, Kate Saxon, Samuel Emery, and Miss E. Romer (Mrs. Robert Brough, mother of Miss Fanny Brough and Mr. Robert

Brough—now an actor-manager of the highest repute in Australasia and India—and, by her second marriage, of Miss Brenda Gibson, for several seasons a member of Henry Irving's Lyceum company). The father of Lionel Brough and his brothers was Barnabas Brough, a dramatic author of some note in his time, who wrote under the name of Barnard de Burgh. There were four brothers of this famous theatrical family, the eldest being William Brough, whose name was on the Lyceum bills more than once; he was born in 1826 and died in 1870. Robert Barnabas Brough, the author of the celebrated Songs of the Governing Classes, was the second brother; born in 1828, he died in 1860. The Brothers Brough, as William and Robert were known, married two sisters, Miss Anne Romer, a noted soprano, who died soon after her marriage, and Miss Elizabeth Romer, who died at sea this year. The third brother was the late John Cargill Brough, some time secretary of the London Institution, and a frequent contributor to scientific literature.

CHAPTER VII

1859-1870

Madame Celeste—A Tale of Two Cities—Handy Andy—Notre Dame—Edmund Falconer again—Peep o' Day—Its great sensational scene—Charles Albert Fechter—The Duke's Motto—Bel Demonio—Alterations in the Lyceum stage—Revival of Hamlet—The *Times* Criticism thereon—Robert Macaire—The Stranger—Mdlle. Beatrice—The Watchdog—The Bride of Lammermoor—Illness of Fechter—Burlesque by W. S. Gilbert—Lilian Adelaide Neilson—Life for Life—Chilperic—Breaking the Spell.

AN actress whose name is conspicuous in the theatrical history of the last century, Madame Celeste, next undertook the management of the Lyceum. Her opening piece, *Paris and Pleasure*, or *Home and Happiness*, produced on November 28, 1859, was founded on a French play, *Les Enfers de Paris*. The manageress represented eight different characters, one of which was Mephistopheles. She was supported by an excellent company, including F. Villiers, Walter Lacy, James Vining, Julia St. George, Miss Hudspeth, and Kate Saville. The drama, however, did not succeed. It will be news to many people that the first representation at the Lyceum of a dramatic version of *A Tale of Two Cities* was in 1860. On January 30 of that year, the adaptation of Dickens's novel by Tom Taylor was acted, Madame Celeste making a sensation as Madame

Defarge. F. Villiers was the Sydney Carton. The drama was in a prologue and two acts, and the dance of the Carmagnole and the trial of Darnay were highly effective tableaux. On March 19, *The Abbé Vaudreuil, or the Court of Louis XV.*, a romantic drama by Colonel Addison, was performed. Madame Celeste impersonated the Abbé, afterwards a favourite *rôle* with her. The chief production of the autumn season of this year was *Adrienne, or the Secret of a Life*, given on November 12, with Madame Celeste in the title part. At the end of this month, a farce which had great vogue in its day, *Handy Andy*, by Sterling Coyne, was played. A hit was made by John Drew, "a good Irishman in a bad piece," as it was chronicled. On February 11, Madame Celeste sustained the character of Ernest de la Garde—a part in which she subsequently won great popularity—in the production of *The House on the Bridge of Notre Dame*, a translation of a French play which had just enjoyed a run of nearly two hundred nights at the Paris Ambigu. Madame Celeste made some remarkably "quick changes" in the course of the part, her last new one at the Lyceum. This celebrated actress was born on August 6, 1814, in Paris, in which city she died on February 12, 1882. Originally a dancer, she appeared in that capacity at the Bowery Theatre, New York, in 1827. Three years later she made her London appearance in the famous ballet of *La Bayadère*. She achieved her greatest fame as Miami in John Baldwin Buckstone's drama, *The Green Bushes*, first acted by her at the Adelphi Theatre on January 27, 1845. She made her final appearance on the stage, at the same theatre, on October 16, 1874, when she played Miami for the two thousand three hundred and forty-second time.

Madame Celeste was followed at the Lyceum by Edmund Falconer, who, in the summer of 1861, once more came into the management of the house. On the opening night



Madame Celeste.

of this season, August 19, he brought out a play written by himself entitled *Woman or Love Against the World*. Saturday, November 9, following, was a red-letter day in the annals of the Lyceum, for the celebrated drama, *Peep*

o' Day, was then acted for the first time. The author played the comedy part of the faithful Barney O' Toole, other leading characters being represented by Hermann Vezin and Walter Lacy. The Colleen Bawn was then nearing its three hundredth night at the Adelphi, and Falconer's play proved a formidable rival in popularity to Dion Boucicault's drama. The cave scene in the latter had a counterpart in the quarry scene in Peep o' Day, which moved the critic of the *Times* to rapture: "The interior of a quarry, with a break through which the water is visible, and over which a wooden bridge is thrown, has been most wonderfully constructed and painted by Mr. Telbin, who has fully obtained that appearance of solid reality which is such a remarkable quality in modern scenic art. The bottom of the quarry, to which Kathleen is decoyed by means of a forged letter, purporting to come from her brother, is only accessible by means of the bridge, and this is cut down by the hired villain, Mullins, when he discovers that his victim has fallen into the snare, but cannot immediately lay his hand upon her, as the masses of rock afford places for temporary concealment. Harry Kavenagh, hearing of his sister's danger, has rushed to the spot, accompanied by the devoted Barney; but, the bridge gone, he can only stand on the edge of the quarry, and is on the point of seeing Kathleen murdered before his eyes. The precipice at his feet affords no pathway, even for a skilful climber; but, maddened by excitement, he seizes the summit of a tree, which has its root at the bottom of the chasm, and which, suddenly bending down, brings him to the place of action, when he kills Mullins, and thus preserves his sister, while Barney shouts with triumph on the top of the quarry. All this was admirably done, and

on Saturday raised a shout of admiration that shook the theatre to its base. Such a thrilling incident, and such a specimen of scene painting, are not often to be witnessed. . . . The customary forms of applause were gone through with far more than wonted enthusiasm, and a long run may be predicted for Peep o' Day, if the paternal sentiments of Mr. Falconer do not prevent him from shortening his own dialogue." It is to be presumed that the author's "paternal sentiments" did not stand in the way of success, for Peep o' Day, or Savourneen Deelish—to give the piece its full title—drew crowded houses to the Lyceum for months.

Mr. Falconer was succeeded by Charles Albert Fechter, whose management of the Lyceum extended to nearly five years—January, 1863, to November, 1867—during which he played many melodramatic and romantic parts. His opening production on Saturday, January 10, of the first-named year, was *The Duke's Motto*, in which he appeared as Henri de Lagadère. The piece was an adaptation, by John Brougham, of *Le Bossu*, a melodrama then being successfully represented in Paris, at the Port St. Martin. The first night audience was representative of the artistic world of London, for Fechter was then at the height of his fame. He had already made his mark as Ruy Blas and Don Cæsar de Bazan, and his Hamlet and Othello had created much controversy. Speculation was rife as to what he would do at the Lyceum. "It will probably be admitted on all hands," said the *Daily Telegraph* of January 12, "that no actor in our time has given rise to appreciations more diverse than Mr. Fechter; he fell in the midst of artistic circles like a shell, scattering opinions right and left. Whilst, to some people, he was a man of

genius, an actor of passion and imagination whose 'realism' was an Aladdin's lamp that carried a new and delightful light into the treasure-caves of Shakespeare; to others he was merely endowed with a certain grace of ingenuity, and in his realism had simply a touch that showed us the outside of the cavern. To some, he was the high priest who conducted the true worship of the poet; to others, the audacious Pagan who robbed the shrine of all its sanctity. There can be little doubt that in both opinions there was a great deal of excess, though it would be rather a laborious matter to accomplish their adjustment. One fact, however, can be seized as a common ground in this contention. If it is only by a certain, though it must be allowed, a very numerous refined class, that Mr. Fechter is accepted as an interpreter of Shakespeare, by all he is held pre-eminent in the drama of romantic and real life, and justly regarded as a most accomplished exponent of its various phases. If many deny him tragic passion, all allow him poetic sympathy, and feel how happily he moves along the broad path of human emotion, even though they deny him the power to scale its heights or plunge into its ravines. Here all the qualities that most distinguish him are allowed to find their fullest scope: his grace, his ease, his picturesqueness, his life, his force, his elasticity, his vivid sense of character, his perfect mastery of detail—all the elements, in fact, that compose his wonderful reality, and which, if they are felt somewhat to limit the ideal world, are able to expand the actual into so much significance and beauty." The house had been re-decorated for the occasion, and in the painted lace of the ceiling were inscribed, in strange confusion, the names of sundry English dramatists—Shakespeare, Massinger, Byron, Sheridan

Knowles, Wycherley, Dryden, Ben Jonson, Otway, Beaumont, Fletcher, Nicholas Rowe, and Sheridan. In curious contrast to the names on the ceiling, nearly all the plays produced by Fechter at the Lyceum were of French origin. There is no need to describe the bombastic nature of *The Duke's Motto*, but, thanks to Fechter's popularity and the general excellence of the interpretation, the piece had a lengthy run.

On October 31 came an even more extravagant piece, *Bel Demonio*, a Love Story, a new version, by John Brougham, of a French drama, *L'Abbaye de Castro*, which already—February 17, 1851—had been dramatised at the Olympic under the title of *The Broken Vow*. As mechanical effects were then the fashion in the theatre, Fechter altered the Lyceum stage very considerably for this production. The play, however, was a poor specimen of its class, a clap-trap effort, lacking in the real elements of drama. "Why," asked Professor Henry Morley, in the *Examiner*, "give us plays without words? There are not two sentences worth hearing in *Bel Demonio*; there is not a flash of wit, not a thought, that does not belong, like the incidents, to the most threadbare stock of intellectual properties for the romantic drama. The piece itself reproduces, with variations, that which had been already worked up, adapted, and draughted into a play for London, called *Sextus V.*, by Mr. Boucicault and Mr. Bridgman. There is an escape of a hunted couple in monks' garments through the ranks of their pursuers, who bonnet to them respectfully, as we have seen done, although it was to more than a couple, in the *Crown Diamonds*. Mr. Fechter tumbles wounded down a rock into a torrent, because, since the successful header in *The Colleen Bawn*, melo-

drama has bidden for favour by the introduction of gymnastics. Indeed, in *Bel Demonio*, as Mr. Brougham takes a header after Mr. Fechter, there is double fare for the gods of this particular sort of dainty. The defect of a play like *Bel Demonio* is not that it contains this kind of stuff, but that it consists of it wholly. It is all sauce and no fish; all action, bounce, conventional stage-chivalry, agony of the boards, pop, enter-at-the-nick-of-time, tableau,



Charles Albert Fechter.

and flummery, without a morsel of substantial thought or satisfying literature under it." *Bel Demonio*, nevertheless, appealed to the public, for it had a lengthy career. Fechter was supported by, among others, Miss Kate Terry and Samuel Emery.

Fechter revived *Hamlet* at the Lyceum—he had previously played the Dane at the Princess's Theatre, in

March, 1861—on Saturday, May 21, 1864. The following extract from the *Times* gives a good impression of this production :

"The revival of Hamlet, so long expected, took place at the Lyceum on Saturday, and a house crowded in every part was the result. That all the modern means that have been devised for the purpose of scenic effect would be employed on this occasion had been confidently anticipated, nor were expectations disappointed. . . . Mr. Fechter, in his revival, has two objects in view. One of them is to give an antique Danish colouring to the whole piece ; the other is to present certain effective situations under a new aspect. The first of these objects can only be proximately attained, for the story of Hamlet refers to a period so completely mythical that an investigation as to his proper dress would prove almost as satisfactory as a search for the pattern-book of Thor's tailor. . . . Mr. Fechter has presented his audience with massive architecture of the Norman style, and the dresses of the mediæval Danish period. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are no longer attired in that conventional costume which is vaguely associated with the courtiers of Spain or Italy, but are dressed like northern warriors—bluff fellows, with thick beards, coarse leggings, and cross garters—and the other personages are after the same model, Mr. Fechter, of course, retaining that peculiar black dress and blonde hair which became so famous at the Princess's. . . . We need not dwell at length on Mr. Fechter's impersonation of Hamlet. Its deficiency in traditional points must be accepted as the result of a general theory to be discussed *a priori*, and even those who find that it lacks physical force must recognise its highly intellectual character. The dreamy side of Hamlet's nature could not be more perfectly exhibited than by Mr. Fechter. . . . The piece altogether is equally played, but to name two characters that particularly stand apart from the rest, we would select the Ophelia of Miss Kate Terry, and the Gravedigger of Mr. H. Widdicombe. The natural unaffected pathos of the former in the mad scene, the comic self-sufficiency and perverted shrewdness of the latter while chopping bad logic by the grave, were admirable."

Fechter began his autumn season this year, on October 22, with *The King's Butterfly*, an English version of *Fanfan la Tulipe*. In the cast with him were John Ryder, H.

Widdicombe, and Miss Carlotta Leclercq. On December 5, he revived *Ruy Blas*, in which play he had appeared, at the Princess's, in October, 1860. On January 21, 1865, he brought out *The Roadside Inn* to a "house full of fog and famous folks," as it was quaintly recorded at the time. *The Roadside Inn* was a version of *L'Auberge des Adrets*, in which Fechter played the character of Robert Macaire, in succession to Frédéric Lemaître. In March, Fechter was ill, and the Lyceum was kept open during his absence with *The Stranger*. Mrs. Haller was acted by Mdle. Beatrice (1839-1878). This Italian player was then new to the English stage, her *début* in London having been made, at the Haymarket Theatre, on October 3, 1864. A month later, at the same house, she had been favourably received as Mrs. Haller, hence her appearance in Kotzebue's gloomy drama at the Lyceum. On Fechter's return, he played—on April 17, 1865—*Belphegor*, Mdle. Beatrice being the *Madeleine*. On May 15, he repeated another of his Princess's successes, *Don Cæsar de Bazan*. Lemaître's rendering of *Don Cæsar* has been called the humorous, Wallack's the melodramatic, and Fechter's the chivalric version.

Fechter opened his autumn campaign on November 6 with *The Watch Dog*, an adaptation, by J. Palgrave Simpson, of an old Ambigu play, *Lazare le Pâtre*. This was not particularly successful or noteworthy, and, on December 22, he played *Edgar of Ravenswood* in an adaptation, also by Palgrave Simpson, of *The Bride of Lammermoor*. Early in the following year, he again revived *Hamlet*, and then, on May 17, of this same year—1866—he brought out one of his most popular plays—*The Corsican Brothers*. Additional interest was lent to this production by the fact

that in the original dramatic version of Dumas' novel, first played at the Théâtre Historique, Paris, on August 10, 1850, Fechter represented the twin brothers, Louis and Fabien dei Franchi. The play was not new to the English stage in 1866, for, in 1852, it was adapted by Dion Boucicault for Charles Kean, who brought it out at the Princess's Theatre. Fechter excluded the famous sliding-trap from his version, and he made but little use of the well-known "ghost melody." It was not until January of the following year that he had occasion to tempt the public with a novelty in the shape of a drama, by Henry Leslie, called *Rouge et Noir*. On September 16, 1867, he played Claude Melnotte before an audience which included Charles Dickens and Wilkie Collins, and made a great success in the part. Two months later—that is to say, in November—he was taken ill during the representation of *Hamlet*, and his part in the last three acts was played by John Ryder. In that month, Fechter severed his connection with the Lyceum. He then went to the Adelphi. From 1872, until his death at Richland Centre, Quakertown, Pa., on August 5, 1879, Fechter resided in America. He was born, in 1824, in London, of mixed parentage, his father being a Frenchman of German extraction, and his mother an Englishwoman. He received his education in France, and he made his first appearance on the stage in Paris.

At Christmas of this year—1867—the Lyceum, then under the management of E. T. Smith, saw some of the early work of Mr. W. S. Gilbert. This was a pantomime entitled *Harlequin Cock Robin and Jenny Wren*, or *Fortunatus*, the *Three Bears*, the *Three Gifts*, the *Three Wishes*, and the *Little Man Who Wooed the Little Maid*. As its lengthy title indicated, it combined a number of

nursery tales ; and the author was much praised for his wit and invention. The "famous Espinosa," as this dancer was then called, and whose death was recently recorded, appeared in it, and there were, in addition to the regular actors, a "French company of terpsichorean artistes and a lilliputian company."



Lilian Adelaide Neilson.

A cloud, which was not lifted until the coming of Henry Irving four years later, settled upon the Lyceum after Fechter's departure. The house was only opened spasmodically. Thus, on March 6, 1869, we find the beautiful and gifted actress,

Lilian Adelaide

Neilson, together with Hermann Vezin and Charles Coghlan, appearing in a new play, written by Dr. Westland Marston and entitled *Life for Life*. In the autumn of this year, *Still Waters Run Deep*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Queen Elizabeth* were played without distinction and without success.

A comic opera, which has been given at various times in London, but not always with success, was tried, under the direction of the Brothers Mansell. This was *Hervé's Chilperic*, adapted by Robert Reece, Frank A. Marshall,

and Robert Mansell. It was produced on January 22, 1870, with the composer—who made his first entrance on a white horse—in the title *rôle*. The cast also included Madame Selina Dolaro, C. D. Marius, Charles Coghlan, and Mr. E. J. Odell. Chilperic was chosen—the adaptation this time being by H. Hersee and H. B. Farnie—for the opening of the Empire Theatre, Leicester Square, on April 17, 1884. Yet another version was brought out, at the Coronet Theatre, Notting Hill, in the spring of 1903. At the Lyceum, Chilperic was preceded by a comedy-drama entitled *Corrupt Practices*, by Frank A. Marshall, and an opening address, written by John Oxenford, the critic of the *Times*, was spoken by Mrs. Keeley.

On May 2, another comic opera, *Breaking the Spell*, an adaptation of Offenbach's *Le Conscriit* was represented with Aynsley Cooke, G. F. Neville, and Madame Selina Dolaro in the cast. But the title was a misnomer. For the spell of ill-luck was not yet broken.

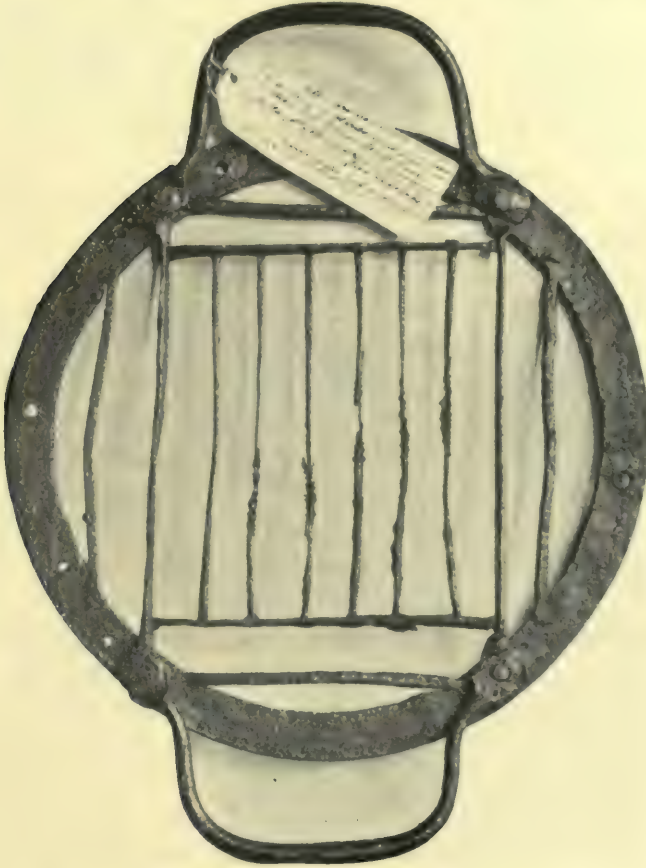
CHAPTER VIII

The Sublime Society of Beef Steaks founded in 1735—Associated with the Lyceum for sixty years—Original and early members of note—George IV., the Dukes of York and Sussex—Dr. Johnson—Charles Morris, the Bard—At the Lyceum, 1809-1830—Again in 1838—Description of the room—Its officers and customs—"Boots"—Fees—Singing—Decline of the Society—Some of its members in 1867—Sale of its effects in 1869—Restored by Henry Irving in 1880.

ANOTHER instance of the shadow which had fallen upon the playhouse prior to the appearance on its stage of Henry Irving is found in the sale by auction, in 1869, of the effects of the Sublime Society of Beef Steaks, which, founded in 1735, had been associated with the Lyceum since 1809. This society of "noblemen and gentlemen" was rigidly confined to twenty-four members, and had its origin in Covent Garden Theatre when John Rich (1681-1761) was patentee thereof. Rich was the famous pantomimist and mechanist who, under the name of Lun, introduced harlequin to the English stage. He is thus alluded to by David Garrick :—

"When Lun appeared, with matchless art and whim,
He gave the power of speech to every limb ;
Tho' mask'd and mute convey'd his quick intent,
And told in frolic gestures what he meant :
But now the motley coat and sword of wood
Require a tongue to make them understood."

Many of the men of the day who were eminent in literature, fashion, and the drama met in the painting-room



The original Gridiron of 1735.
(Afterwards hung in the Society's Room in the Lyceum.)

of Covent Garden in order to chat with Rich and his co-worker, George Lambert, the scene painter. At these

assemblies, it gradually became a custom to partake, at two o'clock, of the hot steak dressed by Rich himself and washed down by "a bottle of port from the tavern hard by." From these gatherings grew the Sublime Society:—

"First Rich, who this feast of the gridiron planned,
And formed with a touch of the harlequin's wand
Out of mighty rude matter, this brotherly band,
The jolly old Steakers of England."

The original members included John Rich, George Lambert—described in the archives of the society as "landscape painter"—William Hogarth, Lacy Ryan, and Dennis Delane. Churchill, Gabriel Hunt, Dean Price, Anthony Askew, John Beard, Theophilus Cibber, Paul Whitehead, John Wilkes, Sir Harry Englefield, the Duke of Norfolk, George Colman, the Earls of Sandwich, Surrey, and Effingham, and John Philip Kemble were among the earlier members. So strict was the rule regarding the numbers of the society that George IV. (when Prince of Wales) having expressed a wish to become a member, had perforce to wait his turn until a vacancy occurred in 1785. The Duke of York was elected in 1790, the Duke of Sussex in 1808. One of the most distinguished of the earlier members was Dr. Johnson, who was elected in 1780. Later on, the roll included Lord Brougham, William Henry Whitbread, the Duke of Leinster, Sir John Cam Hobhouse (Lord Broughton), Sir Francis Burdett, M.P., R. B. Peake, Sir Charles Taylor, the Earls of Strathmore and Dalhousie, and many other well known men of their day. The Arnolds, of course, were members, Samuel James Arnold being elected in 1809, Augustus Walter Arnold in 1839, and Thomas James Arnold in 1850.

One of the greatest characters in the old days of the

society was its Bard, Charles Morris, who died, in 1838, at the age of ninety-three, retaining, until within four days



The Ring.

of his death, his mental faculties in all their youthful vigour. His connection with the Beef Steaks is thus alluded to by a brother member: "Well has our laureate earned his wreath. At that table his best songs have been sung ;

for that table his best songs were written. His allegiance has been undivided. Neither hail, nor shower, nor snow-storm has kept him away ; no engagement, no invitation, seduced him from it.

I have seen him there 'out-watching the bear' in his seventy-eighth year ; for as yet nature had given no sign of decay in frame or faculty ; but you saw in him a green and vigorous old age, tripping mirthfully along the downhill of existence, without langour, or gout, or any of the penalties exacted by time for the mournful privilege of



The Silver Badge.

(Worn by the President of the Day.)

living. His face is still resplendent with cheerfulness.

Die when you will, Charles, you'll die in your youth.'

Such were Curran's words, and they were amply justified."

The Sublime Society had several wanderings in the course of its long existence. On the burning of Covent Garden in 1808, it migrated to the Bedford Coffee House hard by, and there it remained until the re-opening of the then "New" Lyceum in the following year. Here the society stayed until the destruction of the building in 1830. It then adjourned to the Lyceum Tavern in the Strand for a time, returning thence to the Bedford Coffee House, which was its home until 1838, when, its rooms in the new Lyceum being ready, it entered upon its last phase. The rooms still exist. They are on the first floor, on the Exeter Street side of the house, whence they are approached by a private staircase, there being, also, access from the theatre. The chief room and ceiling were Gothic in style. Round the walls were portraits of the members. In the centre of the ceiling was hung the original gridiron which had been rescued from the ruins of two theatres—Covent Garden and the Lyceum. Folding doors, the entire width of the dining room, connected it with an ante-room. At the dinner hour, these doors were thrown apart, giving the joyous view of an enormous grating in the form of a gridiron, through which the fire was seen and the steaks handed. Over the gridiron were the words:—

"If it were done, when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly—"

The day of dining was invariably the Saturday. In the latter years of the society, the meetings began in November and ended in June. Each member had the privilege of bringing one guest. In the earlier days, the members



The Dining Room of the Sublime Society of Beef Steaks.

Motto over the chimney-piece :

*Ne fidos inter amicos
Sit, qui dicta foras eliminat.*

appeared in uniform, consisting of a blue coat and buff waistcoat with brass buttons impressed with the gridiron and motto of the society—Beef and Liberty. They also wore rings bearing the same devices. The form of oath which dated from the foundation of the society, was taken amid much quaint ceremonial, and was as follows :—

“YOU SHALL ATTEND DULY,
VOTE IMPARTIALLY,
AND CONFORM TO OUR LAWS AND ORDERS OBEDIENTLY.
YOU SHALL SUPPORT OUR DIGNITY,
PROMOTE OUR WELFARE, AND AT ALL TIMES
BEHAVE AS A WORTHY MEMBER IN THIS SUBLIME SOCIETY.
SO BEEF AND LIBERTY BE YOUR REWARD.”

The entrance fee to the Sublime Society for many years prior to 1849 was twenty-five guineas. It was then—first sign of decadence—reduced to ten guineas; and there were generally two annual “whips” of five pounds each. Each member paid five shillings for his own dinner, and half-a-guinea for that of his guest. The dinner consisted, of course, of beef-steaks, served hot and hot, and passed from cook to serving-man through the huge grating. “You heard them hissing,” wrote one who had eaten many of them, “you saw the white-clad cook turning them with his tongs—the hot pewter plate was before you (changed on demand with every fresh steak). The accompaniments of baked potatoes, Spanish onions cold and fried, beet-root, and chopped eschalot were there; and at the close, when you wanted an extra excitement to induce you to eat one solitary mouthful more, you would aid in demolishing the last shallotted steak and join in the strife for possession of the final morsel that remained. Toasted cheese ended the repast, and so appetising was the dinner, that with

many who foreswore suppers, supper was the inevitable result. Porter (in pewter), port wine, punch and whisky toddy, were the accompaniments of this simple dinner." Smoking was not permitted until after the Song of the Day and the Usual Toast. The repast over, the cook in white cap and apron came round, pewter plate in hand, to collect the money. The beef, by the way, was sent from the butcher with a man to cut it. The average price paid by the society was half-a-crown a pound. What was not eaten was taken back.

The Sublime Society had the following officers—the President of the Day, the Vice-President, the Bishop, the Recorder, and the Boots, important duties being attached to each holder of office. The Boots

was the last elected of the members, and he sometimes had a hard time of it. "It was his duty to arrive before the dinner-hour; not only to decant the wine, but to fetch



The Sword.

it from the cellar. This latter custom was persevered in until the destruction of the old Lyceum by fire, and was then only abandoned by reason of the inaccessibility of the cellar when the society returned to the new theatre, the present Lyceum, in 1838. No one was exempted from this ordeal ; and woe to him who shirked or neglected it. The greatest enjoyment seemed to be afforded, both to members and guests, by summoning 'Boots' to decant a fresh



The Nipperkin.

bottle of port at the moment when a hot plate and a fresh steak were placed before him."

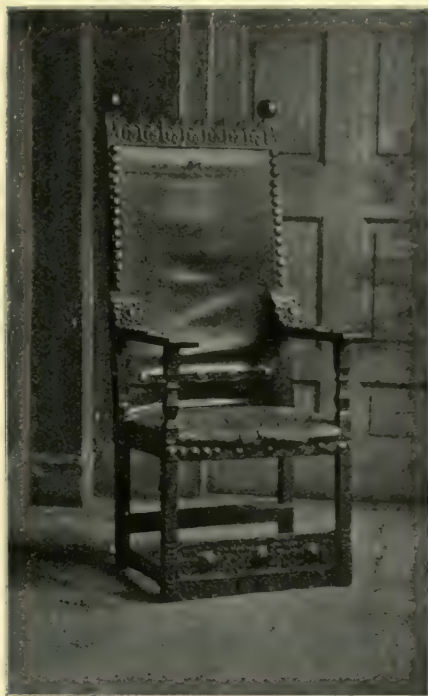
The Duke of Sussex was Boots for a year from the date of his election, when a vacancy occurred and his Royal Highness was released from the post. Until the society ceased to exist, the Duke of Leinster, who had duly served his apprenticeship, constantly usurped the legitimate duties of the Boots by arriving before him, and performing the accustomed services of the day—an especially gracious act considering that the duke drank nothing stronger than water.

Singing was always a feature of the society, among the guests as well as members. Visitors who contributed to the merriment of the Beef Steaks included Michael Blood, James Hallett, Samuel Lover, and Thackeray, whose "Little Bil-ly" was a great favourite.

Singing was always a feature of the society, among the guests as well as members. Visitors who contributed to the merriment of the Beef Steaks included Michael Blood, James Hallett, Samuel Lover, and Thackeray, whose "Little Bil-ly" was a great favourite.

But, alas! these jovial days could not last for ever. Old customs did not agree with modern methods, and a change

came over the society in the early 'sixties. Gout had asserted its supremacy, and the drinking of port was tabooed. Then the dining hour became inconsistent with other requirements. In 1808, the hour was four ; in 1833, it was changed from five to six ; and in 1861, from six to seven o'clock. In 1866, it was altered to eight, and this was the beginning of the end. "Many a man," said the historian of the society, Walter Arnold, writing in 1870, "has turned back to dine at his club with a feeling of disappointment in his heart and a sigh for the good old times, when he found that no one was there, or that only comparative strangers occupied the places of



The President's Chair.

old and valued friends. From the same cause, the attendance of visitors become restricted. Members grew diffident as to inviting guests, fearing lest in lieu of the brilliant evening they had been led from tradition to expect, they might find 'a beggarly account of empty' chairs—or an effort at gaiety usurping the place of wit and

song . . . Seven times in the season of 1866-1867, the President's chair was vacant and the room empty ; and several other times a solitary signature adorned the page. Probably the dinners of these self-sacrificing members were not over gay. On such occasions, the room became sepulchral ; the table, always laid for ten or twelve, looked ghastly ; the hot steaks came and went in too rapid succession, while the waiters dimly glided to and fro. At last, when the solitary one was shut in and left alone with his bottle of old port and his bowl of punch or whisky toddy (if he had the heart to make it), and, reckless of his duty, the list of unuttered toasts lay beside him, it is not unlikely that he looked at the portraits surrounding him in that silent room of the living and the dead, until the memories of the past made them once more his companions and friends."

The end came in 1867, when the remaining eighteen members included the Duke of Leinster, the Earl of Dalhousie, the Earl of Stair, Sir Charles Locock, Bart., and Walter and Tom Arnold. "Brother" W. H. Whitbread, who was elected in 1819, was the oldest member then living. But he only dined with the society once during a period of twenty-eight years. Of the remaining seventeen members, nine resided in the country, and during the final season their united attendances amounted only to ten. During the twenty-nine days that the society dined in 1867, only fifty-nine members attended, making an average of but two a day. So ended the Sublime Society of Beef Steaks.

The effects of the society were sold by auction on April 7, 1869. They included various engraved portraits of members, several drawings, and some oil paintings. The

highest price obtained for a single article was £84, which was given for "A FINE COUTEAU DE CHASSE, with engraved and pierced blade, the handle formed of a group of Mars, Venus, and Cupid in silver, the mounting of the sheath in openwork silver, chased with arabesque figures scrolls and flowers. *The reputed work of B. Cellini*—inscribed 'Ex Dono Antonio Askew, M.D.'"

An oval ivory snuff-box, with a cameo of Dante on the lid, brought £10, and another snuff-box, formed of oak dug from the ruins of the old Lyceum after its destruction by fire, was sold for £4. The total result of the sale was £659 10s. 3d.

The President's chair, of which an illustration is given, came into the possession of the Prince of Wales (Edward VII.). The chair which had been used by George IV.

when Prince of Wales and by the Duke of Sussex, has been specially photographed for this volume. Royalty, however, did not cease its connection with the old Beef Steak room with the cessation of the Sublime Society. In 1880, the dining-room, which had then been used for some years as a lumber room, was restored by Henry Irving, who



Chair used by King George IV., when Prince of Wales, and H.R.H. the Duke of Sussex.

(No. 128 in the Auctioneer's Catalogue, sold for £20.)

therein has had the honour of welcoming Royalty and many of the most distinguished men and women of his time of all ranks and professions. But the motto of the old society :

“ Let none beyond this threshold bear away
What friend to friend in confidence may say,”

must be observed. “ The rest is silence.”

CHAPTER IX

1871-1874

The Bateman management—Enter Henry Irving—Fanchette—More ill-luck—The Pickwick Papers—Irving as Alfred Jingle—The Bells—The London theatres in 1871—The impersonator of Mathias praised by the press—Applauded by the public—The Lyceum becomes the play-going resort of literary and artistic London—Raising the Wind again acted at the Lyceum—Irving as Jeremy Diddler—Miss Kate Bateman plays Leah and Medea—Charles the First produced—Irving's success therein—His wonderful resemblance to Van Dyck's painting—Irving as Eugene Aram—As Richelieu—As Philip de Miraflöre.

THE Lyceum had now become a veritable slough of despond. The public had no faith in it, and the theatrical profession, not without reason, deemed it unlucky. So that the future did not seem by any means hopeful when an American manager, H. L. Bateman, took the house for the professional *début* of his daughter, Isabel. His company included an actor who had already made his mark in London, but, save by a few thoughtful people, was he regarded as the possessor of that tragic power which was to place him on the topmost rung of the ladder of theatrical fame. The opening night of the Bateman management was Monday, September 11, 1871, and it really looked as though the old spell of ill-luck was not to be broken. For Fanchette or the Will o' the Wisp, an adaptation by

Mrs. Bateman from the German, *Die Grille*, by Madame Birch-Pfeiffer, which was taken from the *Petite Fadette* of George Sands' charming story, was a signal failure. It was generally admitted that the young actress was not suited to the requirements of the character. Despite her youth, brightness, and intelligence, she lacked the girlishness of manner, the ease, the spontaneity which it demanded. Nor was the love-lorn, sentimental peasant swain, Landry Barbeau, a part in which Henry Irving could distinguish himself. It was a case of trying to make bricks without straw.

Fanchette was replaced on October 23 by a version of the *Pickwick Papers* by James Albery, in which Henry Irving gave a singularly clever embodiment of Alfred Jingle. But the piece was slight and unsatisfactory. Addison was the *Pickwick*, Belmore the Sam Weller, and Mr. E. J. Odell the Job Trotter. The acting met with commendation. "It was reserved for Mr. Henry Irving to make the great hit of the evening as Alfred Jingle, which was excellent," wrote the *Illustrated London News*. The entry in the diary of the dramatic critic and chronicler, E. L. Blanchard, under the date of the presentation of *Pickwick*, sums up the situation: "See Albery's version of *Pickwick Papers*: very bad indeed; and I think Bateman must soon give up." Blanchard's words were indeed on the point of realisation when Henry Irving stepped into the breach. He had been offered a version of *Le Juif Polonais*, and in this he saw the possibility of securing that hold upon the public which is only gained by acting of extraordinary merit. But the way was not easy. MM. Erckmann-Chatrian's dramatic study was not originally intended for representation on the stage. (It

first appeared in dramatic form at the Théâtre Cluny, Paris, in 1869.) An English version had already failed. So that Mr. Bateman was hard to convince. Fortunately for himself as well as for the English stage, he allowed the judgment of the actor to prevail. Accordingly, amid much



Henry Irving as Alfred Jingle.

doubt and misgiving among all concerned save the representative of the conscience-stricken burgomaster, *The Bells* was played for the first time on Saturday, November 25, 1871. The house was thin, but it made up, after the first surprise, in applause what it lacked in numbers, and Henry Irving achieved that fame which only increased year by year.

It is curious to look back at the aspect of the London theatres at that time. The boards of Drury Lane were occupied by *Rebecca*, a dramatic version by Andrew Halliday of *Ivanhoe*, in which Miss Neilson and Samuel Phelps were appearing; at the Haymarket, Sothorn was playing Lord Dundreary and David Garrick; *Caste* had been revived by the Bancrofts at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, off Tottenham Court Road; and an old drama, *The Hidden Treasure*, was the attraction at the Adelphi. The difference in the hour of beginning theatrical entertainments in London is in curious contrast with that of the present day. At the Lyceum, for instance, the doors opened at half-past six, and the performance began at seven o'clock with a farce, *Is He Jealous?* Then came *The Bells*, at a quarter to eight; and this was followed by a condensed version of *Pickwick*, with Irving as Jingle. Although over thirty years have elapsed since the production of *The Bells*, Sir Henry Irving still plays Mathias together with another character—that of Corporal Gregory Brewster in *Waterloo*—in the same evening, a wonderful proof of his great energy.

The Bells made an instantaneous effect. It became the talk of London, and the critics were unanimous in praise of the impersonator of Mathias. The *Illustrated London News* prophesied better than it knew in stating that "the new drama is likely to interest audiences for some time to come"; and the *Pall Mall Gazette* but echoed the general impression when it said: "acting at once so intelligent and so intense has not been seen on the London stage for many years." The most important criticism which appeared was that in the *Times*, from the pen of John Oxenford, an authority of great weight in dramatic matters. The writer,

contrary to his usual custom, commenced his article with a reference to the acting—a high compliment. “As a valuable actor, especially of bad men in good society,” he



Henry Irving as Mathias.

said, “Mr. Irving has for some years been recognised by the London public. But when he appears as a tragic artist, with the duty of sustaining a serious drama single-

handed, he may almost be said to make a *début*. Decidedly the full measure of his deserts was never known till Saturday last." After describing the plot, he proceeds: "It will be obvious to every reader that the efficiency of this singular play depends almost wholly upon the actor who represents Mathias. The part, while most grateful to an artist who can appreciate and grapple with its difficulties, would altogether crush an aspirant whose ambition was disproportionate to his talent. But, remarkable for the strength of his physique, Mr. Irving has thrown the whole force of his mind into the character, and works out bit by bit the concluding hours of a life passed in a constant effort to preserve a cheerful exterior with a conscience tortured until it has become a monomania. It is a marked peculiarity of the moral position of Mathias that he has no confidant, that he is not subjected to the extortions of some mercenary wretch who would profit by his knowledge. He is at once in two worlds between which there is no link—an outer world that is ever smiling, an inner world which is a purgatory. Hence a dreaminess in his manner which Mr. Irving accurately represents in his frequent transitions from a display of the domestic affections to the fearful work of self-communion. In the dream, his position is changed. The outer world is gone, and conscience is all triumphant, assisted by an imagination which violently brings together the anticipated horrors of a criminal court and the mesmeric feats he has recently witnessed. The struggles of the miserable culprit, convinced that all is lost, but desperately fighting against hope, rebelling against the judges, and protesting against the clairvoyant who wrings his secret from him, are depicted by Mr. Irving with a degree of energy that, fully realising the horror of the

situation, seemed to hold the audience in suspense. It was not till the curtain fell, and they summoned the actor before it with a shower of acclamations, that they seemed to recover their self-possession."

All London flocked to see *The Bells*, and the Lyceum became the play-going resort of the literary and artistic world, for it was recognised that a new force in the theatre had arisen. The actor's many admirers included Lord Lytton, who wrote that the performance "was too admirable not to be appreciated by every competent judge of art. It will," he continued, "be a sure good fortune to any dramatic author to obtain his representation in some leading part worthy of his study and suited to his powers." Mrs. Sartoris (Miss Adelaide Kemble) said that he reminded her of the most famous members of her family, and earnestly exhorted him to devote himself to the higher walks of the drama. In short, it was evident that the new actor was the possessor of the ability to act far more important characters than those which he had already made his own in London. So great was his success that *The Bells* was performed for one hundred and fifty-one consecutive times, the run ending on May 17, 1872. In 1887, M. Coquelin *ainé* appeared in London as Mathias, presenting the character in a rather commonplace fashion. "Irving's hero," it was written at the time, "was a grave, dignified being; Coquelin's was a stout Alsatian, well-to-do, respected by his neighbours, but still on an equality with the humble folk around him. Irving's was a conscience-stricken personage; Coquelin's had no conscience at all. Irving's was all remorse; Coquelin was not in the least disturbed. He takes delight in his ill-gotten treasures. The only side on which he is assailable is that of his fears,

and the arrival of the second Jew, so like the first, terrifies him; and too much wine on the night of the wedding brings on the disturbed dream." Coquelin's Mathias was indeed, a very prosaic performance, leaving nothing to the imagination, and wanting in that fascinating, terrible anguish which makes the Mathias of Henry Irving so tragic a figure.

As a contrast to *The Bells*, *Raising the Wind*—which had been given on the same stage in 1849—was placed in the bills on April 1, 1872, and was played, together with the serious piece of the evening, until the termination of the season on the 17th of the following month. This farce was produced at Covent Garden in 1803, when "Gentleman" Lewis, a light comedian of considerable note in his day, was the Jeremy Diddler, the character now taken with inimitable success by the creator of Mathias. Having kept the audience in a state of nervous excitement throughout the three acts of *The Bells*, Irving now caused an almost continuous roar of laughter by his gaiety in James Kenney's little play.

It was only natural that there should be a great demand in the provinces for the appearance there of the actor who had made himself the rage of London. Accordingly, a tour of the chief towns—in some of which Henry Irving was already a great personal favourite—followed the season at the Lyceum and kept him away from London until the autumn of 1872. In the meantime, however, the theatre was not allowed to remain closed. Immediately following the run of *The Bells*, Miss Kate Bateman—the eldest daughter of the manager—appeared at the Lyceum as Leah, her most popular part, in the tragedy of that name adapted from Mosenthal's *Deborah*, of which Madame

Ristori was the original heroine. A little later, that is to say, in July, Miss Bateman played Medea—another character made celebrated by the Italian actress—in an adaptation by W. G. Wills of Medea in Corinth.

We have already seen that Henry Irving had brought great prosperity to the Lyceum by his intense acting in *The Bells*. He was now about to give a proof that he could impersonate one of the most dignified characters ever drawn for the stage with a lofty mien and yet in such a manner as to show the human heart beating beneath the kingly robe. Mr. W. G. Wills had already, in *Medea*, made one dramatic essay at the Lyceum, and he now gave vent to his literary and poetic vein in *Charles the First*, an original four-act play, in blank verse. It aroused much controversy at the time in consequence of the lessening of the character of Cromwell which the dramatist permitted himself. But all feeling on that point has long been passed, and the play has been accepted with open arms times out of number, wherever it has been presented, ever since its production at the Lyceum on September 28, 1872. On that memorable first night, the disapproval of certain passages in the play could not quell the admiration for the actor, who surprised even his admirers by his superb dignity and triumphed in an unexpected manner. Many thousands of playgoers throughout England and America are familiar with this impersonation, but it is interesting to see how readily its salient features were recognised by the critics of 1872. The *Times* thus summed up the more important features of the interpretation :—

“The problem proposed to Mr. Irving was solved to the satisfaction of all beholders. On his first appearance in the garden a burst of applause rose on every side. There were the same gaunt figure, the

lank face, the sharply cut features, the long hair parted in the middle with which everybody is familiar ; a painting of Van Dyck's seemed to have started living from its frame. The careless play of Charles with the children, to whom he recited the ballad of King Lear, while warned by the Queen of impending peril, was most natural ; his flashes of indignation during the interview with Cromwell electrified the house ; a very fine speech at the end of the third act, in which he likens the traitorous Scot, Lord Moray, to Judas, was delivered with withering force ; and the last farewell to the Queen, the grouping of which was apparently copied from the 'Huguenots' of Mr. Millais, could not be excelled in sustained pathos."

The *Daily Telegraph*, while censuring some parts of the play, did not hesitate to praise the acting of the chief character: —

"To say that Mr. Irving has never done anything better is but faint praise, and conveys to the reader but a trivial idea of the treat that may be in store for him. Physically gifted for such an attempt, it almost appears, as the character is unfolded, that to play Charles was the realisation of the actor's ambition. A careful avoidance of over-emphasis is everywhere noticeable in such strong scenes as exist, and the impersonation from first to last is stamped with a dignity and refinement most welcome to behold. But to the critic, accustomed to watch carefully for nice points of expression and subtlety of thought, the acting of this character is most noticeable on account of its being an instance of careful and reflective study. An actor, if he would truly act, should do far more than is set down for him. He should express hidden thought, as well as say given words. We are not saying that the conception of the character is a right one or a wrong one. We have nothing to do with the historical side of the question ; but this we do say, that the dignified passion of the second scene with Cromwell, the melancholy and incisive pathos of the third with Moray, and the intricate elaboration of manly sorrow in the fourth with his wife, render Mr. Irving's Charles a most interesting study, and most welcome specimen of acting."

That Charles the First proved an enormous attraction is evidenced by the fact that it drew crowded houses for one hundred and eighty nights. The original representative



Charles the First.

Henry Irving made-up exactly like the portrait by Van Dyck, so closely indeed that he was the living semblance of the picture.

of the character of Queen Henrietta Maria, which Miss Ellen Terry afterwards played with such tender feeling, was Miss Isabel Bateman, who, it may be noted, was praised for "the prettiness of her French-English," which "constituted one of the charms of this impersonation."

The author of *Charles the First* was again commissioned for the next Lyceum play. This was *The Fate of Eugene Aram*, in three acts, brought out on April 19, 1873. The chief differences between Lord Lytton's novel on the same subject and the new drama were that in the latter a stronger reason was assigned for the murder of Clark than in the book and that Eugene Aram died of remorse. Although in some respects the part closely resembles that of Mathias, Henry Irving found in Eugene Aram ample opportunity for variation in the expression of remorse and the display of characterisation. One of the chief scenes in the drama is that in which Aram defies his old accomplice, Houseman; and the change from the quiet, thoughtful manner of the schoolmaster, to that of the fierce, subtle, determined man, was admirably represented. "In the concluding scenes," said the *Spectator*, "one, in which he sends Houseman flying from the churchyard at the sight of his suffering; a second, in which, in accents of heartrending grief and contrition, he implores Heaven for a sign of pardon, and flings himself down by a cross, the white, mute, impersonation of mental despair and physical exhaustion; and a third, in which he makes confession to Ruth and dies—the play of his features, the variety and intensity of his expression, are most remarkable."

Hitherto, all the important characters in which Henry Irving had appeared in London had been "created" by him in more senses than that usually applied to the initial

NEW ROYAL LYCEUM THEATRE

Licensed Pursuant to Act of Parliament.
Proprietor & Manager, — **MR. E. D. DAVIS.**

The Erection being completed, the NEW ROYAL LYCEUM THEATRE
WILL BE OPENED
FOR THE RECEPTION OF THE PUBLIC
ON MONDAY EVENING NEXT, SEPT. 29th. 1856.

Mr. DAVIS wishes that his kind Friends and Patrons should themselves judge of the efforts made for their accommodation rather than be guided by any comments from him, he will therefore only express his hopes that it will be apparent to all how anxiously he has laboured to redeem the promise made as to the time of opening.

Architect — **MR. THOS. MOORE**
Assistant Architect and Superintendent of Works, — **MR. JOS. POTTS.**
The Decorative Department from the Pen of **MR. JAS. LINDSAY.**
Executed under his direction by Messrs. SAUNDERS & JOHNSON.
The Masonry by **MESSRS. THOMPSON AND TERRY.**
The Joiner Work by **MR. S. TAYLOR.**
The Gas and other Fittings by **Mr. DANNATT and Mr. CLARKE.**
The Upholstery by Messrs. **ALCOCK, BRYDON, HERRING, &c.**
The Painting Work by **Mr. ARNISON.**

MONDAY EVENING, Sept. 29, 1856

The Season will commence with Sir E. L. BULWER LYTTON's beautiful Play

RICHELIEU

Louis the Thirteenth.....	Mr. COURTENAY	Gaston (Duke of Orleans).....	Mr. IRVING
The Sieur de Beringhen (a Courtier).....	Mr. ALFRED DAVIS		
Baradas (Favourite of the King).....	Mr. ORVELL	The Chevalier de Mauprat.....	Mr. J. C. COWPER
Richelieu, (First Time in Sunderland).....	Mr. DAVIS		
Father Joseph.....	Mr. FOOTE Hugues a Spy	Mr. BRUNT Francois	Miss AGNES MARKHAM
Pages to Richelieu.....	Misses POULSON and MONTAGUE		
Pages to the King.....	Misses MILNER, LEIGH, CARTER		
Count de Clermont.....	Mr. GIBSON	Captain of Guard.....	Mr. WAITE
Quaker.....	Mr. BRODERICK	Governor.....	Mr. S. JOHNSON
First Secretary.....	Mr. MASTERS	Second Do.....	Mr. MORELLI
Julia de Mortemar (Richelieu's Ward).....	Mr. EDOUIN	Third Do.....	Mr. ALFRED DAVIS
Marion de Lorme.....	Miss DE OLIFFORD		

To Conclude with the highly successful New Piece of Oriental Sentimentality, or Sentimental Orientality, extracted from Dreams of the Arabian Nights, by the indefatigable Visionary, HOOZURE-ATAR, and which to be appreciated must be seen, as the most extravagantly laudatory eulogiums must fall immeasurably short of the gigantic merit of

THE ENCHANTED LAKE!

OR THE FISHERMAN AND THE GENIE.

Achmet (Autocrat of Bagdad, of imperial splendour and imperious disposition).....	Mr. S. JOHNSON
Mooney Pacha (his moob-abeed Vizier).....	Mr. FOOTE
Hassan (a Fisherman, who finds out that honesty is the best policy).....	Abdallah (the Black Enchanter).....
Monkey (who though at first, "a beast," ultimately proves himself "a gentleman").....	Mr. ALFRED DAVIS
Genius of the Bottle.....	Mr. EDOUIN
Belim.....	Mr. COURTENAY
Asor and Azim.....	Mr. GIBSON
Cooks.....	Mrs. COURTENAY and Miss CARTER
Fatima and Zelia (interesting young Ladies, Daughters of Achmet).....	Messrs. BRUNT, IRVING, WAITE, BRODERICK, OWEN
Queen of the Peri.....	Misses OWEN and DE OLIFFORD
Paris.....	Miss MILNER
	Messrs. LEIGH, FOULSONS, C. BROCK, E. BROCK and F. BROCK, &c.

This fac-simile of the play-bill of Henry Irving's first appearance on the stage is interesting by reason of the remarkable coincidences which it recalls. It was the first night of a new theatre named, curiously enough, the Lyceum, and Henry Irving played a small part in the piece in which he afterwards acted the title-role on the stage of the Lyceum Theatre, London. He also spoke the first words of the play, "Here's to our enterprise!"

representation of stage parts. But in *Richelieu*, which was chosen for the opening of the autumn season on September 27, 1873, he pitted himself against Macready and—more unfortunately still!—against the prejudice which still existed in the minds of some good folk in favour of that actor. If we reflect that Macready—who played *Richelieu* at Covent Garden in the first performance, on March 7, 1839, of Lord Lytton's play—was an actor of the "old school," although a splendid example of it, it is not to be wondered that his adherents could not fall into line all at once in admiration of an actor who had upset many of the deep-rooted traditions of the theatre. So that the knowledge of the ordeal which he was about to undergo somewhat marred the effect of the first performance of the new *Richelieu*. Yet even then the figure of the Cardinal—aged in body, but with his intellect as keen, his will as unbending, and his sense of humour as bright as ever—was most impressive. "The particular art of the tragedian," wrote Mr. Oxenford in the *Times*, "save in the case of veterans who wore the laurels gained in an earlier part of their career, has not been of late the instrument by which great theatrical success has been obtained in London. The time when the mere expression of tragical emotions was sufficient to awaken the strong sympathies of vast multitudes—the time when Edmund Kean was able to say, 'The pit rose at me,'—seemed to have gone never to return, and such a demonstration as that which was made on the first night of *Richelieu* at the Lyceum could not have been anticipated by the most sanguine amongst the hopeful. . . . Mr. Irving's proficiency in making himself up into the semblance of an historical personage, as shown in *Charles the First*, is again shown in *Richelieu*. The face,

the manner, the attitudes, all give evidence of thought and study. The elocution in the earlier scenes is even and well sustained, and the apostrophe to France, with which the first act terminates, is all that could be desired. The passing regret over bygone strength, which is expressed more by gesture than by words, when Richelieu finds himself unable to lift the sword he had wielded in his youth, is subtly given. But the actor reserves the plenitude of his power for the fourth act. His defence of Julie de Mortemar when the minions of the King would snatch her from his arms, the weight of sacerdotal authority with which he threatens to 'launch the curse of Rome,' his self-transformation into the semblance of a Hebrew prophet of the olden time, with whom imprecations were deeds, combine together to produce a most astounding effect. Here is tragic acting in the grandest style, and it will be borne in mind that although Richelieu is not a tragedy, it belongs practically to the tragical category, as none can do justice to it but a tragedian. Before the effect of the fulmination was subsided came the well-known lines—

‘Walk blindfold on—behind thee stalks the headsman.

Ha ! ha ! how pale he is ! Heaven save my country !’

The scornful laugh by which the flow of indignation is checked, and which was a great point with Mr. Macready, had told with surprising force, and when the Cardinal had fallen back exhausted . . . the old-fashioned excitement, which we associate with the days of Edmund Kean and his ‘wolves’ was manifested once more in all its pristine force. Enthusiastic shouts of approbation came from every part of the house. The pit not only *rose*, but made its rising conspicuous by the waving of countless hats and

handkerchiefs. Not bare approval but hearty sympathy was denoted by this extraordinary demonstration; and this sympathy nothing but genius and thorough self-abandonment on the part of the artist could have produced." The success of *Richelieu* was such that it ran for one hundred and twenty nights.

The next production at the Lyceum—on February 7, 1874—was *Philip*, an original romantic drama, in four acts,



Henry Irving as Philip
de Miraflore.

by Mr. Hamilton Aidé. The main idea of the play is taken from a story of Balzac's, in which it is related how a jealous husband, upon his wife denying that her lover is hidden in a certain closet, has the door by which alone escape is possible bricked up, thus leaving the victim to perish unseen. Mr. Aidé's play, following *Richelieu* and preceding *Hamlet*, has been doomed to comparative obscurity. It was, all the same, a highly meritorious work,

but it was overshadowed by the power of the actor's *Richelieu* and his princely and intensely human *Hamlet*. Irving's greatest effect in Mr. Aidé's drama was made at the conclusion of the first act, where Philip covers the face of the man he believes he has murdered; this effect was original, and it was finely acted.

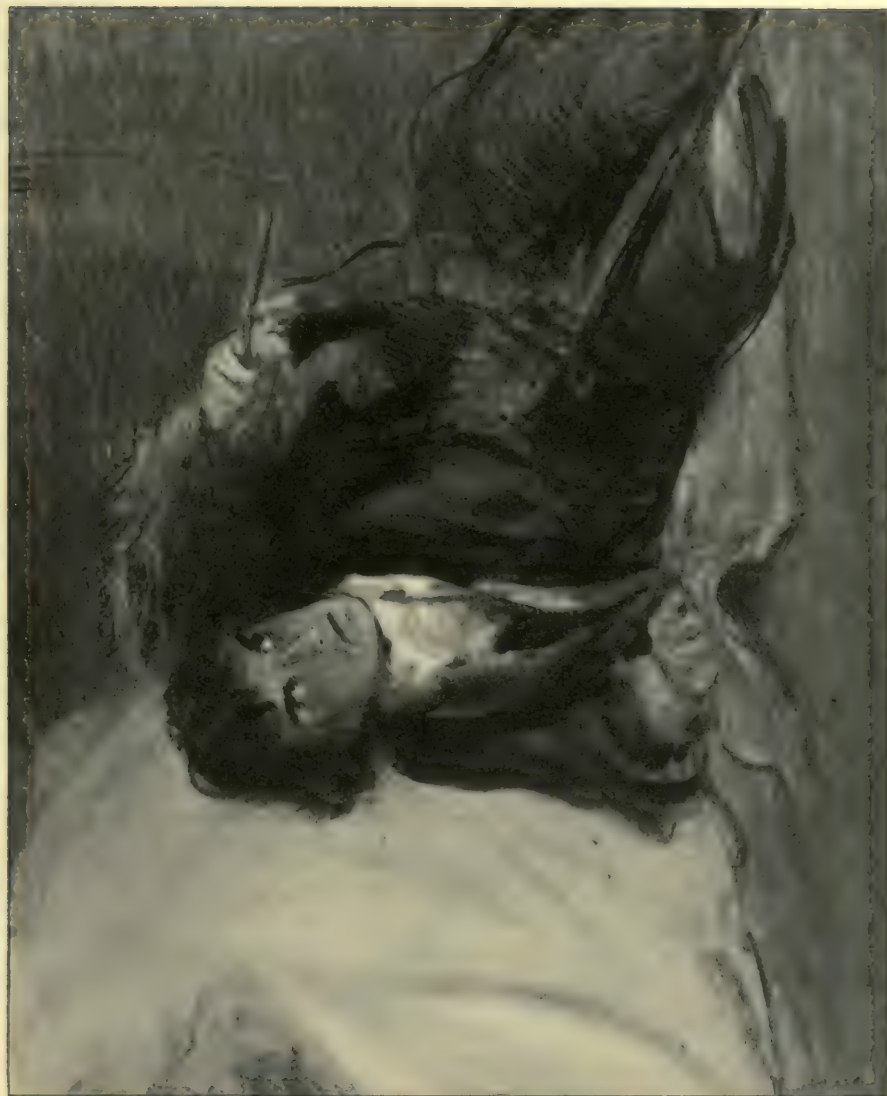
CHAPTER X

1874-1876

Henry Irving appears as Hamlet—The originality of his impersonation—The *Times* criticism—The tragedy runs two hundred nights—Death of Mr. Bateman—Irving's graceful allusion to his former manager and friend—Macbeth revived—Irving's impersonation provokes much discussion—Macbeth played for eighty nights—Othello revived—Tennyson's drama, *Queen Mary*, produced—The Bells and The Belle's Stratagem revived—Irving as Doricourt—As Tristan in *King René's Daughter*—Helen Faucit (Lady Theodore Martin) makes her last appearance on the London stage, as *Iolanthe*—End of the season with Hamlet.

THE autumn season of 1874 began with a revival of *The Bells*. Then took place the greatest event in Mr. Bateman's management, and one of unusual interest in the annals of the stage. This was the representation, on October 31, of *Hamlet*. The excitement evinced on this occasion was extraordinary. For the *Hamlet* of Henry Irving was not the ambitious effort of a beginner, but the crowning point in a career which had been distinguished throughout by unusual ability, hard work, and great determination. Early in the day the pit was besieged, and the house was crowded within a few minutes of the opening of the doors. When the actor first stepped on the stage, he was warmly welcomed. Thereafter, a long and trying silence prevailed, for the new *Hamlet* was

unlike anything that had been anticipated. He did not resemble the well-known Hamlet of Sir Thomas Lawrence—the elaborate trappings, the flowing plumes, the funereal velvet of Kemble were absent. He had not donned a flaxen wig, as in the case of Fechter; he did not wear the order of the Danish elephant. He was simply attired, as a man and a prince, in thick-ribbed silk, the loose, flowing cloak being edged with fur; a rich, but unostentatious costume, relieved only by a massive gold chain. His face bore a troubled, wearied expression; the disordered black hair was thrown carelessly over the forehead, and the marvellous eye of the actor told of the distracted mind. Here, in very truth, were “the dejected ’haviour of the visage” and “the fruitful river in the eye.” But so subtle was the actor’s art, so daring his originality, that silence prevailed throughout the first two acts. According to a thoughtful spectator, “silence also ushered in the third act. All was new in this Hamlet—the speech, the dress, the manner. Nothing called to mind the effect-snatching expedients of his predecessors. No wonder the audience was held fast by a spell expressed in silent astonishment. But the astonishment was of a kind that by a psychological law usually precedes admiration. Scarcely had the dialogue with Ophelia in the third act reached its termination when the spell was broken; a hurricane of applause shook the benches, and everyone felt that the tall, seemingly nervous actor, who, with ruthless nonchalance, had thrown overboard the conventional, pathetically puffed-up prince, to make of him an unconstrained gentleman with a tinge of melancholy upon him—that this actor was the new Hamlet, the Hamlet of the future, the long-desired performer of Shakespeare.”



Henry Irving as Hamlet.

"Marry, this is miching mallecho ; it means mischief." — Act III. Sc. 2.

His conception of Hamlet was akin to that formed by Goethe: "We have here an oak planted in a costly vase, fit only to receive lovely flowers within its bosom; the roots expand, the vase is shattered." He ever kept in mind the idea of Hamlet's princely birth, but he was human, tender to a degree. The humanity of his Hamlet was the key-note of his performance. "Why?" wrote the *Times*, "is Hamlet so irresolute? Why is he so slow to obey the promptings of the ghost? If we rightly interpret Mr. Irving's performance, his reply to this question is to the effect that the nature of Hamlet is essentially tender, loving, and merciful. He is not a weak man called upon to do something beyond his powers, but he is a kindly man urged to do a deed which, according to the *lex talionis*, may be righteous, but which is yet cruel. In Mr. Henry Taylor's Philip von Artevelde one of the personages asks Philip, in order to ascertain his fitness to become a ruler in very stormy times, 'Can you be cruel?' thereby implying that without something like an element of cruelty in his nature his appointed work cannot be effectually done. According to Mr. Irving, as we suppose, it is to the utter lack of cruelty in his nature that Hamlet's shortcomings are to be attributed. He is a judge to whom the black cap is so abhorrent that he can never persuade himself to put it on. Mercy will always usurp the seat of Justice when her usurpation is least desirable. He is capable of any amount of sorrow—sorrow for his dead father, sorrow for Ophelia. An undercurrent of tearfulness runs through all his discourse, but of unmitigated hate he is unsusceptible, if we answer in the negative Shylock's question, 'Hates any man the thing he would not kill?'—more unsusceptible than he himself suspects. The hideous

crime revealed by the ghost may cause him to 'fall a cursing like a very drab,' and bestow upon his uncle a large number of ugly adjectives; but, for all that, he does not like to kill him. This view of the character is first made known in the soliloquy, at the end of the second act, beginning:

'O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!'

in which the descent from frantic determination to no determination at all is most delicately traced. Whenever an opportunity offers, Mr. Irving drops into a thoroughly colloquial manner of speaking, and this is nowhere more conspicuous than in his address to the players, to whom he talks as a familiar friend. Here he may be charged with compromising the dignity proper to the princely station, and the charge will not be unfounded.

"But his Hamlet is not to be compared with other Hamlets; it is right to show that he is consistent with himself. Dignity in his Hamlet is not a predominating quality. His heart is too large and too kindly to attach much importance to a social distinction which has brought him nothing but misery, and, placed in the world where he has one only friend, he is glad to talk freely to persons with whom guile is impossible. Be it composed of strolling players or grave-diggers, any company is better than that of the courtly spies who are at the beck of his uncle and aunt-mother. We have heard many persons talking fluently of a metaphysical Hamlet without understanding in the slightest degree the meaning of the adjective thus applied, unless, indeed, a person who has arrived at a conclusion that people may be deterred from committing suicide by a

belief in future punishments is to be deemed a metaphysician on that account—in which case metaphysicians would be formidably numerous. We are inclined to suspect, however, that the word ‘metaphysical’ as applied to Hamlet, is a showy substitute for meditative. If so, it is utterly inapplicable to the Hamlet of Mr. Irving, a fine genial creature, who would willingly have clasped all the world to his bosom had not untoward events rendered its ‘uses’ so stale and unprofitable. If he soliloquises much, it is because he can find no one else wherewith he can freely talk; but it is his nature to be sociable. There is a theory to the effect that Hamlet, while assuming madness, is really somewhat insane. From this theory we entirely dissent, at the same time admitting that his sensitive nature subjects him to the highest degree of nervous excitement. This could not be more clearly expressed than by Mr. Irving. His frequent changes from sitting to standing, his fitful walks up and down the stage, the frequent visits of his hands to his forehead, represent to perfection the acme of what in common parlance is called ‘fidget.’ Most powerfully is the nervous condition exhibited in the scene with Ophelia. The pretended madness, the unquenchable love, and the desire to utter stern truths seemed to hustle against each other. The words seemed to be flung about at random, and the facial movements corresponded to the recklessness of the words. The storm of applause which followed this display of genius denoted not only admiration, but wonder.” Triumph followed triumph throughout the evening; the play-scene, with its elaborate working-up and dramatic climax, evoked another remarkable outburst of applause; and the closet scene, in which the actor set tradition at naught by describing the portraits

by no other means than imaginative power, was characterised by exquisite pathos."

The new *Hamlet* naturally provoked much discussion, but it was admitted that Henry Irving now stood in the first place on the English stage, a position from which he has never fallen back. *Hamlet* crowded the Lyceum for two hundred nights, this unparalleled run of the tragedy terminating on June 29, 1875. During all this time, the theatre was only closed for one week, and that in consequence of the death of Mr. Bateman on March 22. That Henry Irving had the greatest regard for his manager and friend is well known. In a speech at the Lyceum, he thus alluded to the sad event which had caused him to temporarily interrupt the performance of *Hamlet* :—

"In my pride and pleasure at your approval, I cannot but remember the friend whose faith in me was so firm, a friend to whom my triumphs were as dear—aye, dearer, I believe, than had they been his own. The announcement last autumn that I, a young actor, was thought fitted to attempt *Hamlet* came from a warm and generous heart, and I cannot but deeply feel that he to whose unceasing toil and unswerving energy we owe in great measure the steadfast restoration of the poetic drama to the stage—I cannot but regret that he will never meet me, as he has done on so many occasions, to confirm your approval with affectionate enthusiasm and tears of joy."

It is important to observe that the unprecedented success of this revival of *Hamlet* at the Lyceum, a success which has not been approached in the history of the tragedy, was by no means due to extraneous aids. Miss Ellen Terry had not joined the Lyceum forces, and the beauty of her *Ophelia* was not to be made known until more than four years later. As for the scenery, it was most meagre, for *Hamlet* was not expected to run fifty nights, let alone two hundred. So poor was it that the churchyard scene of

Eugene Aram again did duty for the burial of Ophelia. Facts are stubborn things, and it is well to put the truth on record when we find one of the great quarterly magazines, in 1883, attributing much of Henry Irving's success at the Lyceum to "the enormous pains to captivate the eye," "the splendour of the scenery," "the beauty and archæological fitness of the dresses," which, so far as this revival of Hamlet was concerned, existed only in the writer's imagination.

The success of Hamlet occasioned much astonishment to all but close observers, for only some four years previously one of the shrewdest of theatrical managers had declared that the higher drama had lost its hold upon the public, an assertion which the popularity of opera-bouffe and kindred entertainments seemed to justify. But the absence of the higher drama from the London stage was due not so much to the want of capacity on the part of the public to appreciate its charms, as to the want of an actor who would meet the requirements of its leading characters. Few things are more repugnant to a cultivated mind than a fine play inadequately represented, and many persons held aloof from the theatre in the early seventies of the last century, because they had but little inducement to enter it. But the early achievements of Henry Irving at the Lyceum, especially in Richelieu, reawakened their dormant interest in the drama, and the commercial success of his Hamlet was a sure proof that if, at other times, the tragedy had failed to attract, the blame was not due to the public. The dramatic revival which now took place was made apparent in various directions—in the production of classical plays at other houses, in the decline of opera-bouffe, and in the decrease of burlesque. A new epoch in the history of the English stage had now begun, an

epoch in which the ennobling influence of the poetic drama might be again exercised in a London theatre.

The success of Hamlet led to another Shakespearean revival, that of Macbeth, with which the autumn season of 1875 opened on September 18. The appearance of the new Hamlet in the character of Macbeth provoked one of the fiercest controversies which have ever raged in connection with matters theatrical. Even those who found least to admire in the actor who had attacked their strongest prejudices were forced to admit that his idiosyncrasy seemed exactly suited to the melancholy Dane. It was freely admitted that he excelled in the representation of poetic meditateness, and his mastery of the self-communion in which Hamlet blunts his great purpose was indisputable. But how was it possible for him to act the usurping soldier, the barbaric tyrant with whom enormous physical force was always associated? Some writers averred that his Macbeth was wanting in masculinity, others that his terror was entirely opposed to Macbeth's reputation for courage. This was not Macbeth at all, but a sort of mediæval Mathias, it was averred. "In Mr. Irving's conception there is intention, but it is wrong, and there are individual merits which will not compound for systematic error," said one critical journal. On the other hand, there were many champions of the new standard of acting which had been raised at the Lyceum, and there appeared various learned essays which gave praise, though not by any means indiscriminately, to the Macbeth of Henry Irving. His conception, it was maintained, was in strict accordance with the entire spirit of the play. It was held by those writers in agreement with the view taken by the actor, that Macbeth, though brave in the field, was

the trembling prey of his imagination from the moment that he entered upon his terrible course of murder, and that the collapse of his courage was completed when, with words of withering scorn, his wife snatched the dagger from his palsied hands. The Macbeth now represented on



Henry Irving as Macbeth.

the London stage was simply a selfish assassin tinged with a touch of poetry. The idea of wading through slaughter to a throne was not new to him, for it had been in his mind long before the opening of the play. "The weird sisters," it was written, "waylay him as a result of the sympathy which evil has with evil, and in order to urge him along the fatal path into which, as they are well aware, he has al-

ready struck. He is unable to resist the inducements they hold out, but owing at once to cowardice and the remnants of a higher spirit, he shrinks from the actual perpetration of the crime until his wife screws his courage to the sticking point. His distress after the murder rises not so much from remorse as from terror—selfish and grovelling terror. This is again shown when Banquo's ghost appears before him, but in the final scenes,

as the narrowing circle of fate closes round him, he rises to a display of courage which is really grand, meeting his destiny in something like the spirit of a soldier and a ruler of men."

These views were endorsed by Mr. Oxenford in what, unhappily, proved to be the last criticism which he penned. "The popular Macbeth," he said, "was not only a brave soldier, with all the physical qualities proper to his vocation, but likewise an apparently well-disposed man, who could have gone on safely to the end of his days if he had not unluckily met three old women on a heath, who put wicked thoughts into his head, and had he not, moreover, been cursed with an unscrupulous wife, who did her best, or, rather, her worst, to mature these thoughts into action. The evil agencies by which Macbeth is influenced are universally recognised; not so the extreme facility with which he yields to them. In the very first scene, when he has not been on the stage two minutes, no sooner has he been greeted by the witches as Glamis, Cawdor, and 'King hereafter,' than his manner suggests to Banquo, in whom the witches cause no terror whatever, the question—

'Good sir, why do you start, and seem to fear
Things that do seem so fair?'

"The information a few minutes afterwards that the first prediction has been fulfilled leads immediately to a self-confession of murderous devices, conveyed in a speech too familiar to need citation. There is no nobility of nature about Macbeth; he is totally impotent to resist the very earliest allurements to crime, and is utterly without the fortitude to endure the consequences. After she has read

his letter, and before she has seen him, his lady speaks of him as one who would not play false and yet would wrongly win." It should be added, that no matter how the critics disagreed about the general conception of Macbeth by Henry Irving, there was no denying that his interpretation of the murder scene was at once terrible and impressive, while his acting in the final scene—his desperate resolution, his consciousness of more than human destiny, and his defiance of that destiny when it is turned against him—formed, said the *Pall Mall Gazette*, "a picture such as is not imagined without genius nor made visible without art."

Macbeth was played for eighty nights; then came a revival of Hamlet, which, on February 14, 1876, gave place to Othello. The latter event speaks well for the actor's moral courage. Apart from the arduous nature of the task, he brought himself into direct comparison with the Italian tragedian, Tommaso Salvini, who, in the previous summer, had made a great impression on London playgoers as the Moor. "However sound," said a contemporary critic, "may be Dogberry's opinion as to the unsavoury nature of comparisons, one in the present case is unavoidable, and we proceed to draw it in an impartial spirit. Signor Salvini's Othello, then, was a splendid example of the capabilities of histrionic art, but gave undue, at times, offensive, prominence to the sensual side of the character. By reason of his majestic presence and the beauty of his voice, he seemed to have been expressly designed by nature to represent Othello. These physical advantages Mr. Irving does not possess, but he gains a point against the Italian tragedian by exhibiting Othello as an intellectual and romantic rather than a sensual personage, and, in the most



Henry Irving as Philip of Spain.

trying scenes of the play, his acting could hardly be surpassed for depth and genuineness of feeling." Othello, it may be frankly said, was not one of the most popular of Henry Irving's earlier impersonations, but its reception by no means discouraged further essays in the same character. In the summer of 1881, for instance, Irving and Edwin Booth alternated the parts of Othello and Iago at the Lyceum—Miss Ellen Terry being the Desdemona—with conspicuous success. The advance which the actor had made in his art was exemplified in a remarkable manner by the difference between his first and his later Othello—a difference so conspicuous that it constrained one of the least friendly of his critics to suggest that never, probably, had the play been presented with greater effect than when Irving acted Othello in the year last named.

The next production, on April 18, was Alfred Tennyson's drama, *Queen Mary*, in which the comparatively small part of Philip of Spain was taken by Irving, whose artistic appreciation of the cold, satirical, heartless cruelty of the character enabled him to give a fine portrait of that arrogant monarch. The play was the first of the dramatic works of the late Poet Laureate seen on the English stage. No less than three of the Bateman sisters appeared in it—Miss Bateman (Mrs. Crowe), Miss Isabel Bateman, and Miss Virginia "Francis."

Queen Mary was succeeded by a revival, on June 12, of *The Bells* and *The Belle's Stratagem*. In the latter, Irving, of course, was seen as Doricourt, a character which he had taken at the St. James's Theatre on October 6, 1866—his first appearance in London, by the way, as an actor of recognised position, the laurels which he had won in the country—chiefly in Manchester and

Liverpool—having secured him an engagement at the St. James's as stage-manager as well as actor. Doricourt had now become one of his perfect studies in light comedy, and it formed an interesting contrast to his weird acting, on the same evening, as Mathias. On the 23rd of the month he appeared, for his benefit—for the theatre was nominally under the management of the late Mr. Bateman's widow—as Count Tristan in Sir Theodore Martin's version of King René's Daughter, as Eugene Aram, and as Doricourt. Additional interest was given to the occasion by the circumstance that Miss Helen Faucit then made her last appearance on the London stage, in the character of Iolanthe. On the following night, this memorable season terminated with a performance of Hamlet.

CHAPTER XI.

1876-1879

Macbeth played for the re-opening of the theatre—Richard III. revived—The death-blow to Colley Cibber—Interesting souvenirs presented to the new Richard—Irving as Lesurques and Dubosc—As Louis XI.—Vanderdecken—Henry Irving becomes the lessee and manager of the Lyceum—He engages Miss Ellen Terry and begins his first season with Hamlet—Miss Terry as Ophelia—Testimonial benefit to Mr. Chippendale—The Lady of Lyons—Various revivals—Six characters in one night—An interesting speech—Characters played by Miss Terry during her first engagement at the Lyceum—Some benefit performances of note—A compliment from a French critic—Miss Geneviève Ward.

THE theatre was closed in the autumn of 1876, as the actor who had brought it such unexampled success was enjoying a most enthusiastic greeting in Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, Newcastle, Edinburgh, Dundee, Glasgow, Belfast, and Dublin. It was re-opened on December 16 with a revival of Macbeth. Then came, on January 29, 1877, Henry Irving's fourth Shakespearean character at the Lyceum—Richard III. The play, as now represented, was "strictly the original text, without interpolations, but simply with such omissions and transpositions as have been found essential for dramatic representation." The event thus had its literary interest,

since it gave the death blow to the travesty of Shakespeare by Colley Cibber which had held the stage ever since 1700. But such pieces of patchwork are long-lived, and it was not until the play was again revived at the Lyceum, in December, 1896, that Cibber was finally disposed of, so far as Richard III. is concerned. The Lyceum version, while conforming to the requirements of the modern stage, restored, with adroitness and with reverence for the author's intention, the text of a drama which, apart from its poetical and literary merit, is a singularly fine piece of theatrical work. "To have done this," I wrote on the occasion of the second revival, "to have thrown tradition to the winds, to have discarded Cibber and replaced Shakespeare, is much. But Henry Irving has done more than this. He has given to the stage an impersonation of Richard which alone entitles him to rank with the greatest Shakespearean actors of the past. He recognises that the Richard of history and of Shakespeare is a man who dominates by the sheer force of his intellect. His misshapen body is compensated for by the alertness and penetration of his brain, and by the strength of will which enables him to stifle heart and conscience while he marches steadily, relentlessly, without fear or remorse, through a sea of crime to the throne, his innate cunning and deadly, biting humour becoming more emphasised until he reaches the goal of his ambition. It is then, when his strength should be greatest, that he fails, and his mother's curse comes home to him. The first three acts are mainly devoted by Henry Irving to the delineation of the character from this standpoint. Now, as formerly, his best scenes in this early portion of the play are those in which Richard woos Lady Anne and receives the deputation of his tools,

the Lord Mayor and Buckingham, with the offer of the crown. The malignant humour of Richard's opening soliloquy is one of Henry Irving's finest bits of acting, and the wooing scene is played by him so magnificently that, while he makes himself plausible and finally convincing to Lady Anne, he makes the audience feel the cleverness, the trick, the scorn, the mockery, of the entire scene. The delicacy of Richard's interview with the young princes is admirably delineated by him, but by far his finest effect in the first part of the play is undoubtedly obtained in the manner in which he portrays Richard's hypocrisy in the scene in which he cajoles the Lord Mayor and the other simple-minded citizens by his simulated piety. As an example of high comedy, nothing better could be imagined. The depth of Richard's cunning, his supreme contempt for the men around and beneath him, and, above all, his wicked, satisfied delight in gulling the easily-led fools, his fiendish glee at cheating them to his own purposes, and the splendid sarcasm of the actor—in face, voice, and gesture—at the end of this brilliant scene will long be remembered among the gems of his impersonation. It should be clearly understood that there is no attempt at 'point-making' by the latest Richard. On the contrary the character is pictured as a whole, and the actor succeeds in making possible—nay, probable, much that may seem at first sight inconsistent. His gradual, or, to speak more precisely, his complete, development of the character is one of the highest accomplishments of his acting. The player, like the character, is proficient in the art of metamorphosis, as witness the change when Richard is King. He no longer dissembles. He casts Buckingham aside, asks the first person at hand for a servitor to do murder

for him, and goes to his doom a self-confessed, bold, callous villain, a change in outward manner which is another of the Lyceum Richard's most thoughtful effects. Again, in the last act, he plays the character in a somewhat melancholy, subdued manner which is in keeping with Richard's 'I have not that alacrity of spirit, Nor cheer of mind, that I was wont to have,' thus making the audience feel that Richard's will is weakened, so that the apparitions of his dead victims appear as the working of conscience, not as a stage trick. In the final scene, the burst of war-like courage is well exhibited, his fight with Richmond is excellent, and his death, sudden as it should be, is another superb bit. Not the least merit of this artistic, thoughtful, and extremely interesting impersonation is that Henry Irving's Richard, for all its knavery and cruelty, has the touch of princely manner about it, thus disposing of the mouthing, bellowing Richards who have too often assailed the stage, trumpet-tongued and with brute force."

The revival of 1877 was received with acclamation by the public and press alike, the *Morning Post* pronouncing Irving's impersonation of Richard "a fine performance, brilliant, energetic, impassioned, and full of life and character." During the first run of the tragedy at the Lyceum many interesting theatrical souvenirs came into Henry Irving's possession. He was presented on the first night by William Henry Chippendale (1801-1888)—who had acted with Edmund Kean and had been associated with the Haymarket Theatre for many years, and an admirable impersonator of "old men," who had played Polonius during the long run of Hamlet at the Lyceum in 1874-75—with the sword used by Kean when he acted Richard.

Not long afterwards he was given another Kean relic—the Order of St. George, which his great predecessor in the part had worn. A few months previously another valuable tribute to the position which he now held had come from the Baroness Burdett-Coutts. This was a ring with a curious history. It had long been worn by David Garrick, who, on his death-bed, bequeathed it to his butler, whose executors sold it to a man named Patrick, who was “long connected with Theatrical Speculations,” the “widow of whom sold it, and hence it passed into the possession of Miss Burdett-Coutts” in 1865. The memento bears the following inscription:—

THIS RING ONCE MR. GARRICK'S
is presented by the
BARONESS BURDETT-COUTTS
TO MR. HENRY IRVING
in recognition of the gratification derived
from his Shakesperian Representations,
uniting to many characteristics of his
great predecessors in histrionic art,
(whom he is too young to remember)
the charm of original thought, giving
delineations of new forms of dramatic interest,
power, and beauty.
JULY, 1876.

Richard III. having run its course in the early part of 1877, Henry Irving left Shakespeare for a time in order to take, on May 19, the comparatively easy dual rôle of Lesurques and Dubosc in *The Lyons Mail*, that remarkable melodrama which is founded upon a celebrated trial that took place in 1796, when an innocent man, Joseph Lesurques, was condemned to death for a murder committed by a notorious captain of a gang of robbers, Dubosc, whom he had the terrible misfortune to resemble in appearance.

Lesurques was executed for the crime of which he was entirely innocent, and it was not until four years after this grave judicial error that the real culprit paid the penalty of his wicked deed and fearful silence on the subject. The trial furnished the basis of the plot for *Le Courier de Lyons*, first represented in Paris on March 16, 1850, the authors having the express sanction of the descendants and heirs of Joseph Lesurques for the use of his name. There are various English versions of the French play, the first of which was acted at the Standard Theatre on March 10, 1851. The adaptation played at the Lyceum was that made by Charles Reade for Charles Kean, who produced *The Courier of Lyons* at the Princess's Theatre on June 26, 1854. The play, now called *The Lyons Mail*, a title first used by Mr. J. W. Clark, of the Cambridge A. D. C., though only a melodrama of the ordinary kind, filled the better parts of the house as well as the pit and gallery until the end of the season. This result was mainly due to the acting of Henry Irving, and it is a wonderful proof of his popularity in this piece that the drama is still retained in his *répertoire*, although more than a quarter of a century has elapsed since he was first seen in it. Still more remarkable is the fact that his impersonation of the two characters, far from having become dulled by repetition, has, on the contrary, developed with



Henry Irving as Dubosc.

successive years into one of his finest achievements. Frequently as the play has been revived at the Lyceum—not to mention the numberless performances of it given by Irving throughout the United Kingdom and the United States of America and in Canada—there has been advancement, not retrogression, in the portrayal of the chief characters. The curious physical resemblance between Lesurques and Dubosc counts for much in the popular view, but the rendering of these characters—the middle-aged, refined, affectionate son and father, and the bullying, brutal drunkard—form an opportunity for contrast which has resulted in a most interesting, indeed fascinating, pair of portraits. To think of Irving as Lesurques—as thousands of playgoers remember him—is to recall that splendid picture of innocence and dignity which he presents in the second act where the charge of murder seems beyond refutation. And the terrible ferocity of the last act—when Dubosc, maddened with brandy, watches the approach of his victim to the scaffold—is remembered with a distinctness that is almost appalling. In France, it may be noted, the play was provided with two endings—the innocent Lesurques being duly executed on one night, while on the other a reprieve arrived and Dubosc was arrested. The latter conclusion was adopted, to the exclusion of the first, in the English version.

After another remarkably successful tour in the provinces during the summer and autumn, Henry Irving returned to the Lyceum and appeared in an important new part on March 9, 1878. This was Louis XI. in the play of that name which had been adapted by Dion Boucicault for Charles Kean from the French of Casimir Delavigne. He was received with great enthusiasm in the character.

Louis XI., like Mathias and Lesurques and Dubosc, is still acted by him, and, if possible, with more effect now than in the earlier representations. Even at first, it was a notable impersonation. From the numerous articles which appeared in 1878, I select the following from the pen of the late Frederick Hawkins, the first editor of that admirable magazine, the *Theatre*:—

“The grim humour, the hypocrisy, and the passionate vindictiveness of which the part is composed are played upon by Mr. Irving with as much facility as if they were merely the keys of an instrument. Though, as has been publicly announced, Mr. Charles Kean’s prompt-book of the play has been secured for this revival, Mr. Irving’s Louis XI. offers no resemblance to that of his illustrious predecessor save in the sustained force by which it is distinguished. The conception is original from beginning to end, and is as comprehensive as it is new. To dwell upon the details of the performance is no less grateful a task. The pale cadaverous face, the glittering and restless eyes, the unsteady hands, and the feeble gait are completely in character; and the dress, an important part of which is the black bonnet, with the oft-spoken images of saints in front, would be historically correct in every particular if some holy relics were attached to the cloak. In his suppressed rage at the defiant address of the Burgundian envoy; in the ill-concealed satisfaction with which he listens to the compliments paid to him by the buxom Martha; in the scene where Marie unsuspectingly reveals her secret to him; in the whirl of different feelings—terror, intervening hope, and finally despair—with which he cowers under the uplifted dagger of the man whom he has so cruelly injured;—in all this, as in the passages where the grovelling superstition, the



Henry Irving as Louis XI.

sardonic humour, and the devilish vindictiveness of the man are exhibited, Mr. Irving was equal to the occasion. Not the least of Mr. Irving's triumphs in this character, as may be supposed, was gained in the last act. The King's mind has been all but completely shattered by his terror on being confronted in the solitude of his room by Nemours, but if anything he clings to life more tenaciously than ever, and in an interval of reason, to impress those about him with a belief that he is still well, he arrays himself in all the paraphernalia of royalty. Decked out in this way, he dies by almost imperceptible degrees in the presence of the audience. Though not of opinion that the approach of death is an unfit thing to be represented on the stage, we cannot but think that this scene is unduly prolonged by Mr. Irving—prolonged, in fact, until to many persons in front it becomes really painful. It must be admitted, however, that his acting is exceedingly fine and true to nature. The mental wanderings, the flashes of memory, the returns of savage fury, and the accessions of remorse are vividly depicted, and nothing can be more impressive in its way than where, recovering from what his physician has erroneously supposed to be death, but with death written in every line of his bluish face, he rises to pluck the crown from the Dauphin's hand—only, however, to fall back dead immediately afterwards. It is only necessary to add that a figure of a very repulsive kind is rendered fascinating by the warmth of imagination and technical skill with which it is embodied."

Louis XI. ran for three months in the year of its production at the Lyceum, where it was succeeded, on June 8, by a new poetic drama, in four acts, written by Mr. Percy Fitzgerald, in conjunction with the late W. G. Wills. This was by no means the first time that the same subject had been treated on the stage. A German legend of the fifteenth century was the basis of a play called the Flying Dutchman, produced at the Adelphi Theatre on December 4, 1826, with T. P. Cooke as Vanderdecken. The beautiful idea of releasing the accursed mariner from his fate through the love of a faithful woman, used by Wagner in his opera, is due to the German poet, Heinrich Heine. The Lyceum version was not popular, and the

principal part afforded but scant opportunity for acting. Indeed, Irving could do little more than look picturesque. But, unlike Cooke—who was so disgusted with the part in the Adelphi version that he abandoned it in favour of another actor—he played it to the end of its short run.

There now ensued a great change in the fortunes of the Lyceum and of the actor who had already brought it such an unexampled era of prosperity. The theatre, since the death of Mr. Bateman in 1875, had been under the nominal management of his



Henry Irving as Vanderdecken.

widow, who now retired from that position, the theatre passing into the hands and sole control of Henry Irving, who, throughout his long managerial career, has succeeded, where Macready and Charles Kean failed, in making the higher drama a commercial, as well as an artistic, success. One of his first steps

was to engage Miss Ellen Terry—who was then playing Olivia at the Court Theatre—the actress who shared in many of his triumphs for twenty-two years. The opening night of the theatre under the new management was Monday, December 30, 1878, when Hamlet was revived. Hitherto, as we have already seen, the tragedy had been given at the Lyceum with scenery of very modest kind. The new manager at once showed that it was possible to produce Shakespeare with scenery that should be pleasing to the eye yet a positive help in the interpretation of the poet. Hamlet, accordingly, was now represented with proper regard to its poetical adornment, yet without any undue overburdening of the tragedy by excess of scenery and lavish costume. The eventful night was the occasion, it need hardly be said, of tremendous enthusiasm. At the conclusion of the performance there were loud calls for the principal players, and the new actor-manager, in response to the demands for a speech, said :—

“ I cannot allow this event to pass without telling you how much I thank you for the way in which you have received our efforts. As long as I am lessee here, rest assured I shall do my utmost for the elevation of my art, and to increase your comfort. In the name of one and all concerned in the production of this piece, I thank you from my soul. To produce the Hamlet of to-night I have worked all my life ; and I rejoice to think that my work has not been in vain. You have attested in a way that goes quickest to the actor's heart that you have been satisfied. When the heart is full, the weakness of man's nature manifests itself, and I feel now like a child.”

Although the conception of Hamlet, as given by Irving in 1874, had not been altered, the performance was rendered with still finer effect, and the tender grace of the new Ophelia suggested some modification of the scenes

with her. According to the *Athenæum*, "The chief grace in the new representation consisted in the delivery of the speeches to Ophelia in the third act. In this, the mocking tone did not for a moment hide the profound emotion under which Hamlet laboured, and the hands which repulsed her hands trembled with passionate longing."

The Ophelia of Miss Terry was greeted on all sides with approbation, the critics being unanimous in praise of this exquisite performance. The *Saturday Review*, for instance, considered that as Ophelia Miss Terry won for herself a place in the first rank of actresses. It found in her impersonation the same

"power of conception of a tragic part, and of execution so perfect that every word seems to be spoken, every gesture to be made, from the emotion of the moment, on the importance of which we have already insisted. The pathos of the mad scene is not more thought out or more natural than the emotion shown in the scene where Polonius dismisses Laertes to his ship, a scene of which Miss Terry relieves the possible tedium by exhibiting, during Polonius's speech, the interest which a sister would naturally feel in her brother's prospects. Miss Terry's performance begins by striking a note of nature, and is natural and complete throughout, with one exception. Throughout, one is impressed by the consistency of the actress's conception, and by the perfect expression given to her idea. These



Miss Ellen Terry as Ophelia.

qualities are especially remarkable in the mad scene. Here, instead of the incoherent outpouring of imbecile unconnected phrases which has too often passed for Shakespeare's representation of Ophelia's madness, Miss Terry shows us an intelligible, and (if one may use a seemingly paradoxical term) consistent state of dementia. That is, her power of facial expression, her action, and her intonation, combine to show us the origin in her disordered state of mind of each wild and whirling word that she utters. Every broken phrase and strange image is suggested by some recollection of the time before she was distraught. The intense pathos with which this catching up of interrupted threads of thought is presented it is impossible to describe, except in the words of Laertes :—

‘Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself,
She turns to favour and to prettiness.’

The exception referred to above occurs in the scene where Ophelia returns Hamlet's presents. Here Miss Terry is too much given to tears, too little to amazement. But this is a very small blemish, if it is a blemish, in a performance full of beauty.”

Hamlet was so popular on the occasion of this its second revival at the Lyceum with Henry Irving as the Prince of Denmark, that it crowded the house for one hundred and eight nights. An interesting event took place on the evening of February 24, which was set apart for the last appearance at the Lyceum of Mr. Chippendale. “The entire receipts,” stated a note on the programme, “will be given to Mr. Chippendale, who, after a career of sixty-eight years upon the Stage, will on this occasion bid good-bye to the public he has so faithfully served. The Ladies and Gentlemen of the Dramatic Company of the Lyceum have on this occasion one and all gracefully tendered their services.” At the end of the performance, the veteran actor, who was the Polonius of the revival of Hamlet, bade farewell to the London stage. On April 17, 1879, The Lady of Lyons was brought out, with Irving as Claude Melnotte and Miss Terry as Pauline. Lytton's

sentimental comedy gave way to a series of interesting and popular revivals—Eugene Aram, Richelieu, Louis XI., Charles I., The Bells, and The Lyons Mail. On July 25, the last night but one of the season, the actor-manager gave a remarkable example of his versatility by appearing in the first act of Richard III. (Miss Terry playing Lady Anne), in the fourth act of Richelieu, in the fourth act of Charles I., in the third act of Louis XI., in the third act of Hamlet, and as Jeremy Diddler—six characters of, perhaps, the widest divergence in the history of the drama. In a speech made on that occasion the actor-manager stated that the receipts during the first seven months of the new management amounted to the handsome sum of £36,000, a sufficient answer to the prophets who had foretold disaster to the venturesome actor who should become his own manager in a large London theatre. The speech is so characteristic, as well as interesting, that I give it almost in full:—

“I cannot resist the temptation of saying a few words to you to-night, for when last I had the honour of speaking to you at the commencement of my management, your sympathy and generous approval gave me vast hopes—which hopes have been almost realised, for at the close of my first season I can tell you of an achieved and distinct success. The friendship, Ladies and Gentlemen, which exists between us, and which I have the inestimable privilege of enjoying, is not a thing of to-day, or yesterday, or a year ago. For nearly eight years we have met in this theatre, and the eloquence of your faces and of your applause has thrilled me again and again. You will not, therefore, I am sure, consider it as springing from any vain feeling on my part, when I tell you the receipts of this theatre during the past seven months. We have taken at the doors, since we opened on the 30th December, the large sum of thirty-six thousand pounds. I can give you no better proof than this of your generous appreciation of our work. To-night I have chosen to appear before you not in one character, but in six, for each part has been associated with so much

pleasure, so many kindly wishes from you, and such sympathetic recognition, that I wished, before taking my first real holiday for a long time, to renew in one night some of the memories of many. I should like to have played half a dozen other characters, but was warned that five hours would even tax your patience, so I reluctantly consented to the short programme I have set before you. My next season, Ladies and Gentlemen, if all be well, will be a longer one than the past has been. To stay amongst you I have foregone all engagements out of London, and I intend to begin again here on Saturday, 20th of September, eight weeks from to-morrow. I shall try my utmost to continue in your favour, and I have such belief in your judgment that I feel the way to get and keep that favour is to deserve it. The germ of the future we should seek in the past, and I mean that the future of my management shall profit by the experience I have lately gained. The lesson that I have learned is that frequent change in a theatre is a desirable element—an element gratefully accepted by the public, and perhaps even more gratefully by the actors; and during the coming time I shall endeavour to put before you such pieces as I believe you desire, and which will give you pleasure. For a week or two after our opening we shall play *Hamlet* once during the week, and that will be continued as long as you come to see it. That this is not a rash resolve you will believe when I tell you that during the past seven months we have acted *Hamlet* one hundred and eight times, and each time to an overflowing house. During the first week of my campaign I shall present to you Colman's play of *The Iron Chest*, in which I shall have the temerity to attempt a celebrated character of Edmund Kean's—Sir Edward Mortimer. This drama I shall produce with much of the old music, and I shall try to show you what our forefathers delighted in. With this play I shall occasionally revive some of your old favourites, and so give time for the preparation of one of our master's master-plays—*Coriolanus*—in the production of which I shall have the invaluable benefit of the research of that gifted painter, Mr. Alma-Tadema. Of other kinds of work, I have a store, and two original plays ready, one of which has already excited much interest—I mean Mr. Frank Marshall's drama founded on the romantic and pathetic story of Robert Emmet. And so, Ladies and Gentlemen, I trust that next season our boat will 'Sail freely both with wind and stream.' I am reluctant to leave you, for almost my happiest hours are spent in your company, but as I have still to 'Raise the Wind' to-night, I must bring these parting words to an end. In the names of one and all behind our curtain I thank you

for your past kindness, and in eight weeks' time, when we meet again, I hope you will see me once more sustained by new hopes and old remembrances."

The characters sustained by Miss Terry in the regular bill during her first engagement at the Lyceum were, in addition to Ophelia, Pauline, and Lady Anne, Ruth Meadows in Eugene Aram and Queen Henrietta Maria in Charles the First. In these days a farce was frequently given in conjunction with the principal piece of the evening. Thus we find *The Lady of Lyons* preceded by *High Life Below Stairs*, in which Mr. Kyrle Bellew, Mr. A. W. Pinero, and Miss Alma Murray appeared.

In addition to the testimonial performance to Mr. Chipendale, there were two matinées of exceptional interest, apart from the regular programme, during the first season of Henry Irving's management. On May 29, a benefit was given to Henry Marston (1804-1883), a valued actor of the old days, who had fallen into ill-health in his declining years. The proceedings opened with a "classical comedietta" entitled *All is Vanity*, an adaptation by Alfred Thompson, from *La Revanche d'Iris*, originally produced at the Prince of Wales' Theatre, Liverpool, in the summer of 1878, with Miss Ellen Terry as Iris and Mr. Charles Kelly as Diogenes. Miss Terry and Mr. Kelly resumed these parts at the Lyceum. This charming little play was followed by *Much Ado About Nothing* with Mr. W. H. Kendal as Benedick, Miss Henrietta Hodson as Beatrice, Mr. Edward Terry as Dogberry, and other well-known actors in the cast. Another interesting morning performance—for a hospital charity—given on June 24, introduced the second act of Robertson's comedy, *Ours*, to the Lyceum stage, interpreted by Mr. and Mrs.

Bancroft (as they then were), the late Arthur Cecil, the late John Clayton, Mr. H. B. Conway, the late Miss Le Thièrè, and the late Amy Roselle. The second and fourth acts of Charles I. were given, and the performance concluded with Cox and Box, conducted by the composer, Arthur Sullivan. Arthur Cecil was the Box, Corney Grain the Sergeant Bouncer, and Mr. George Grossmith—now the Elder, then the Younger—the Cox. Cox and Box, by the way, has an intimate association with the Lyceum stage inasmuch as the original Box and Cox was produced here on November 1, 1847. The farce was adapted from the French—Frisette and La Chambre à Deux Lits—by J. Maddison Morton, “with the evident purpose of giving Mr. Buckstone and Mr. Harley some special fun to enact”—the former being the Box, the latter the Cox. In 1866, Mr. (now Sir) F. C. Burnand took Maddison Morton’s “book” in hand with a view to adapting it to the musical requirements of Arthur Sullivan. The names in the title of the old farce were reversed, and Cox and Box is still played at benefits and by amateurs. So that this “amusing interlude,” as it was called in 1847, has held the stage for over half a century.

A high compliment was paid to Henry Irving during this season by M. Jules Claretie—then one of the most renowned of French critics and now the director of the Théâtre Français—who witnessed several of his best impersonations. M. Claretie contributed a most eulogistic article to *La Presse*, from which I reproduce that portion which is confined to the acting:—

“Richelieu was the first play in which I saw Mr. Irving in London. Here he is superb. The performance amounts to a resurrection. The great Cardinal, lean, worn, eaten up with ambition, less for

himself than for France, is admirably rendered. His gait is jerky, like that of a man shaken by fever; his eye has the depths of a visionary; a hoarse cough preys upon that frail body, which is yet made of steel. When Richelieu appears in the midst of the courtiers, when he flings scorn in the face of the mediocre man who is to succeed him, when he supplicates and adjures the weak Louis XIII., Irving gives that grand figure a striking majesty.

Mr. Irving's literary and subtle mind leans to psychological plays—plays which, if I may so express myself, are more tragic than dramatic. He is the true Shakespearean actor. In his hands Richelieu acquires vitality; he raises the character to his own level. This is also the case with *The Bells* and *The Lyons Mail*. Mathias has the deep remorse of a Macbeth; the destiny which governs Hamlet weighs over the head of Lesurques. How great was the pleasure which his performance of Hamlet afforded me! For a literary man it is a source of real enjoyment. In Hamlet the taste and variety of the costumes brings to mind some of the pictures of Alma-Tadema and Jean-Paul Laurens. I have never seen anything so deeply, so tragically true, as the scene of the burial of Ophelia. In this character Miss Ellen Terry might be taken by one for a pre-Raphaelite apparition, for a living model of Giovanni Bellini.

As Louis XI. Mr. Irving has been judged superior to Ligier. Dressed with historical accuracy, he is admirable in the comedy element of the piece, and the chief scenes with the monk and Nemours. The hands, lean and crooked as a Harpagon—the fine hands whose character is changed with each of his *rôles*—aid his words. And how striking in its realism is the last scene, representing the struggle between the dying king and his fate!

The final performance of Henry Irving's first season as his own manager at the Lyceum was on July 26, Eugene Aram and Raising the Wind constituting the bill.

During the absence of Henry Irving and Miss Terry, the Lyceum was occupied by Miss Geneviève Ward, who produced, on August 2, an "original romantic drama," in five acts, by Messrs. J. Palgrave Simpson and Claude Templar, entitled *Zillah*, in which Miss Ward "doubled" two characters. Mr. Forbes Robertson, Mr. J. H. Barnes, and other excellent actors appeared in it. But *Zillah* was

a failure and was promptly withdrawn in favour of an adaptation from Victor Hugo's tragedy, *Lucretia Borgia*, in which Miss Ward played the leading *rôle*. On August 21, the first performance was given of an original three-act drama, written by Messrs. Herman C. Merivale and F. C. Grove, *Forget-Me-Not*, which restored the fortunes of the brief season. Miss Geneviève Ward subsequently toured the play throughout the English-speaking world, her dramatic interpretation of *Stephanie de Mohrivart* gaining her much fame. Mr. Forbes Robertson was the original Sir Horace Welby in this admirable play.

CHAPTER XII

1879—1883

The Bells again—A play by Mr. A. W. Pinero—The Iron Chest—Revival of The Merchant of Venice—Two hundred and fifty performances thereof—The Belford benefit—Iolanthe—Charles the First—Lady Bancroft—Sims Reeves—J. L. Toole—Miss Ellen Terry recites The Captive—Irving recites Eugene Aram—The Corsican Brothers revived—The Cup produced—Henry Irving, Edwin Booth, and Miss Terry in Othello—Modus and Helen—The theatre closed for alterations—Two Roses revived—Romeo and Juliet revived—Runs one hundred and sixty nights—Speech by Lord Lytton—Much Ado About Nothing revived—Two hundred and twelve performances—A memorable farewell—Henry Irving, Miss Ellen Terry, and the Lyceum company depart for their first American tour—Miss Mary Anderson, and Lawrence Barrett, at the Lyceum—The *Times* on the result of Henry Irving's visit to America.

THE autumn season of 1879 opened on September 20 with The Bells. On this occasion there was an item of considerable interest—in view of the high position now held by Mr. A. W. Pinero—in the bill. For the principal piece of the evening was followed by one of Mr. Pinero's early plays, an original comedieta entitled Daisy's Escape. Mr. Pinero, who appeared as Lord Stanley in the 1877 revival of Richard III., and remained a member of the Lyceum company until July, 1881, acted in his own play, together

with Mr. Frank Cooper and Miss Alma Murray. The Bells, it may be further noted, was preceded by Bayle Bernard's farce, The Boarding School, acted by Mr. J. H. Barnes, Miss Myra Holme, Miss Florence Terry, Miss Pauncefort, and others. On September 27, George Colman the Younger's play, The Iron Chest, was revived, and Henry Irving, as Sir Edward Mortimer, gave a fine performance of the somewhat dull part in which, in 1796, John Philip Kemble had failed, thereby incurring the anger of the author, whose invective preface to the first edition of his dismal drama is well-known to all students of the stage. Although the piece was only put on as a stop-gap pending the preparations for The Merchant of Venice, it was produced with all the thoroughness for which the Lyceum was already noted under the new management. The *Daily Telegraph* said:—

“Brought face to face with the old-fashioned Iron Chest, Mr. Irving, no doubt, encountered considerable difficulty. Here was a play, half opera and half tragedy, studded with glees and madrigals by Storace, made familiar by tradition, known to every musical society in the kingdom, and constructed in direct opposition to modern theories. What, therefore, has been done to render it in harmony with the spirit of the age, preserving, at the same time, the weird air of poetical gloom, inseparable from such a curious and fantastic composition? To begin with, the music has been reduced to a minimum. The famous ‘Five times by the taper’s light’ is given only in the orchestra, where, in the course of the evening, the whole musical score is heard. In fact, the only music sung on the stage is the glee ‘Jolly Friars Tipped Here,’ which will be found in the third act, that is brought to a conclusion with ‘Huzza! huzza! we’ll drink and we’ll sing.’ It is a three-act play in the original, and Mr. Irving has entirely reconstructed it in four acts and ten scenes. The hybrid, semi-Elizabethan, semi-Carolian, costume has been discarded, and the period of Caleb Williams, 1792, selected for the play, which is mounted, moreover, with strict attention to the furniture and architecture of the late eighteenth century, admirable alike in detail and

effect, and presenting to the audience very noble and impressive stage-pictures. . . . The play, by means of earnestness and expression, has been worked up to its legitimate conclusion, and even those who can recall Edmund Kean's tones in 'Wilford! Remember!' and have a distinct recollection how the great actor, profiting by his experiences as harlequin, made a wonderful back fall at the end of this play that startled and astonished the house, will be prepared to admit there is much, very much, in the persuasion of an actor who, at this period of the nineteenth century, can ensure legitimate interest in such a play. Like so many of Mr. Irving's haunted and hunted characters, it is still unlike them, and we do not believe that, under so many disadvantages of subject, he has ever acted so well, so firmly, and so conscientiously."



Miss Ellen Terry as Portia.

The revival of
The Merchant of
Venice, on No-
vember 1, was

received with tremendous enthusiasm, a verdict which it well deserved, for the Shylock of Henry Irving—then, as now—was one of his most thoughtful and successful impersonations, and Miss Ellen Terry gave that matchless embodiment of Portia which will be famous in the annals of the stage as long as its history lasts. The Shylock of

this first revival at the Lyceum differed greatly from the rendering to which we have been accustomed by Henry Irving in later years. His Jew was then an extremely dignified and a most sympathetic figure. In fact, it was considered by many Jewish writers as a vindication of their race; and the pathos of Shylock's humiliation in the hour of his defeat, made doubly impressive by that singularly fine exit in the trial scene, did much to efface the impression made by the malignity of the Jew's determination to have the due and forfeit of his bond. The scenery afforded some delightful pictures; the moonlit garden of the last act was a thing of beauty in itself. It is no wonder, so admirably acted and so exquisitely produced in all respects was this revival of *The Merchant of Venice*, that it obtained the record number of 250 consecutive representations. There were many discussions as to the view of Shylock taken by Henry Irving, but as to the interpretation of it on those lines there was a chorus of praise from the press. The eulogies which appeared in the London journals alone would fill a large volume, one of the most flattering of all being a long article in the *Spectator*. The criticism is too long to quote *in extenso*, but I give some of its most salient passages:—

“Mr. Irving's Shylock is a being quite apart from his surroundings. When he hesitates and questions with himself why he should go forth to sup with those who would scorn him if they could, but can only ridicule him, while the very stealthy intensity of scorn of them is in him, we ask, too, why should he? He would hardly be more out of place in the ‘wilderness of monkeys,’ of which he makes his sad and quaint comparison when Tubal tells him of that last coarse proof of the heartlessness of his daughter ‘wedded with a Christian,’—the bartering of his Leah's ring. What mean, pitiful beings they all are, poetical as is their language, and fine as are the situations of the play, in comparison with the forlorn, resolute, undone, baited, betrayed,



Henry Irving as Shylock.

implacable old man who, having personified his hatred of the race of Christians in Antonio, whose odiousness to him, in the treble character of a Christian, a sentimentalist, and a reckless speculator, is less of a mere caprice than he explains it to be. He reasons calmly with the dullards in the Court concerning this costly whim of his, yet with a disdainful doubt of the justice that will be done him; standing almost motionless, his hands hanging by his sides—they are an old man's hands, feeble, except when passion turns them into gripping claws, and then that passion subsides into the quivering of age, which is like palsy—his grey, worn face, lined and hollow, mostly averted from the speakers who move him not; except when a gleam of murderous hate, sudden and deadly, like the flash from a pistol, goes over it, and burns for a moment in the tired, melancholy eyes! Such a gleam there came when Shylock answered Bassanio's palliative commonplace, with—

‘Hates any man the thing he would not kill?’

At the wretched gibes of Gratiano, and the amiable maundering of the Duke, the slow, cold smile, just parting the lips and touching their curves as light touches polished metal, passes over the lower part of the face, but does not touch the eyes or lift the brow. This is one of Mr. Irving's most remarkable facial effects, for he can pass it through all the phases of a smile, up to surpassing sweetness. Is it a fault of the actor's or of ours that this Shylock is a being so absolutely apart, that it is impossible to picture him as a part of the life of Venice, that we cannot think of him ‘on the Rialto’ before Bassanio wanted ‘monies,’ and Antonio had ‘plunged’ like any London city man in the pre-‘depression’ times, that he absolutely begins to exist with the ‘Three thousand ducats—well?’ These are the first words uttered by the picturesque personage to whom the splendid and elaborate scene, whose every detail we have previously been eagerly studying, becomes merely the background. He is wonderfully weird, but his weirdness is quite unlike that of any other of the impersonations in which Mr. Irving has accustomed us to that characteristic; it is impressive, never fantastic—sometimes solemn and terrible. There was a moment when, as he stood, in the last scene, with folded arms and bent head, the very image of exhaustion, a victim, entirely convinced of the justice of his cause, he looked like a Spanish painter's *Ecce Homo*. The likeness passed in an instant, for the next utterance is:

‘My deeds upon my head. I crave the law,
The penalty and forfeit of my bond.’

In the opinion of the present writer, his Shylock is Mr. Irving's finest performance, and his final exit is its best point. The quiet shrug, the glance of ineffable, unfathomable contempt at the exulting booby Gratiano, who, having got hold of a good joke, worries it like a puppy with a bone, the expression of defeat in every limb and feature, the deep, gasping sigh, as he passes slowly out, and the crowd rush from the court to hoot and howl at him outside, make up an effort which must be seen to be comprehended. Perhaps some students of Shakespeare, reading the Jew's story to themselves, and coming to the conclusion that there was more sentiment than legality in that queer, confused, quibbling court, where judge and advocate were convertible terms, may have doubted whether the utterer of the most eloquent and famous satirical appeal in all dramatic literature, whose scornful detestation of his Christian foes rose mountains high over what they held to be his ruling passion, drowning avarice fathom deep in hatred, would have gratified those enemies, by useless railing, and an exhibition of impotent rage. But there is no 'tradition' for this rendering, in which Mr. Irving puts in action for his Shylock one sense of Hamlet's words—'The rest is Silence.' The impression made by this consummate stroke of art and touch of nature upon the vast audience was most remarkable, and the thrill that passed over the house was a sensation to have witnessed and shared."

During this first run of *The Merchant of Venice*, Henry Irving produced, on the afternoon of December 10, 1879, *Two Roses* for the benefit of an old and much respected actor, William Belford (who died in 1881). He resumed his old character of Digby Grant, being supported by Mr. C. W. Garthorne, Mr. Charles Warner, Mr. E. Righton, Mr. W. Elton, Miss Amy Roselle, Miss Kate Bishop, Miss Sophie Larkin, and others. Miss Ellen Terry delivered an address, and the trial scene from *Pickwick*, specially arranged for the occasion by John Hollingshead and Charles Dickens the younger, introduced a great array of stage favourites. The benefit realised the sum of £1,100. On May 20, 1880, *Iolanthe*, an idyll in one act, adapted by W. G. Wills from Henrik Hertz's piece, *King René's*

Daughter, was brought out, for the benefit of Miss Terry, who played the heroine to the Count Tristan of Irving. The season terminated on July 31, when Charles the First was the first item in the programme, Miss Terry playing the Queen. Songs by Mr. Herbert Reeves, and a reading by Mrs. (now Lady) Bancroft followed, while Sims Reeves once more trod the Lyceum stage and sang Tom Bowling and the Bay of Biscay. Miss Terry recited "Monk" Lewis's poem, *The Captive*, for the first time, Mr. J. L. Toole gave his popular sketch, *Trying a Magistrate*, and the lengthy and varied programme concluded with the recital of Hood's poem, *The Dream of Eugene Aram* by, and a speech from, the actor who had now won for himself so distinguished a position on the English stage.

The autumn season of 1880 commenced, on September 18, with a revival of *The Corsican Brothers*, a version of which had been produced by Fechter, on the same stage, in 1866. The version played by Charles Kean at the Princess's Theatre on February 24, 1852, was used for the Lyceum revival. The performances of Kean and Fechter have been contrasted on more than one occasion. "In the lighter scenes of the first two acts, Kean," in the opinion of G. H. Lewes, "wanted the light and graceful ease of Fechter; but in the more serious scenes, and throughout the third act, he surpassed the Frenchman with all the weight and intensity of a tragic actor in situations for which the comedian is unsuited. The deadly grief of a strong nature nerved to a great catastrophe—the sombre, fatal, pitiless expression—could not have been more forcibly given than by Charles Kean in this act; and in the duel scene there was a stealthy intensity in every look and movement which gave a shuddering fascination to the

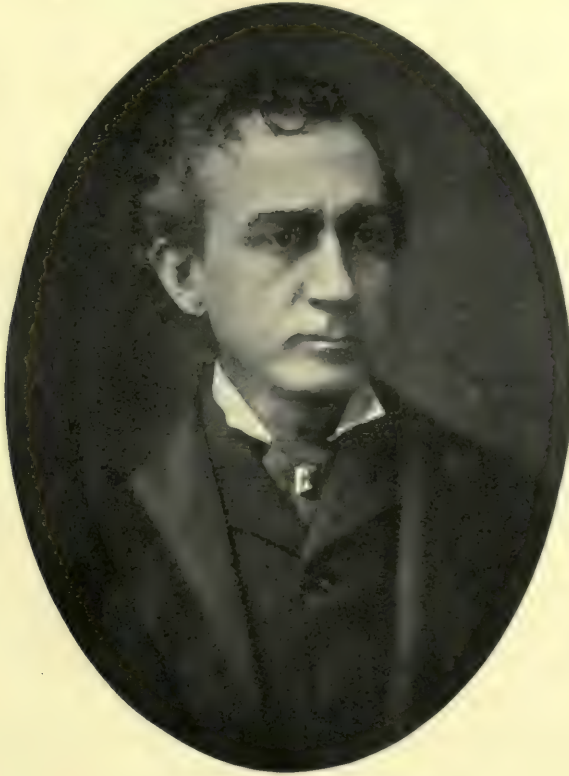
scenes altogether missed by Fechter." The successor of Kean and Fechter in this dual *rôle* combined the merits of both performers. [As Fabien, in the château in Corsica, Irving's acting was marked by an affecting tenderness towards his mother, by an exuberance of good spirits and good nature; he was dignified and cheerful, excepting when overcome by the gloomy forebodings about his brother. But as Louis, in Paris, he became the calm and measured man of the world. In the duel scene with Château Renaud at Fontainebleu, he displayed all the picturesque weirdness which makes the triumph of the avenger a thrilling incident even to those who care least about this form of drama. The play was magnificently mounted, the ball-room scene being one of the most brilliant of its kind ever staged, and the glade where the duel takes place being unusually picturesque. The Corsican Brothers was acted for one hundred and ninety nights during the season.] September 18 also saw the first representation of Mr. Pinero's comedietta, *Bygones*, acted by Miss Alma Murray, the author, and other members of the Lyceum company.

On January 3, 1881, another play by Alfred Tennyson was produced at the Lyceum. This was *The Cup*, a drama founded on Plutarch's treatise, *De Claris Mulieribus*. Although not to be placed in the first rank of dramatic work, it was much more effective as a stage-play than *Queen Mary*, and with Henry Irving as *Synorix* and Miss Terry as *Camma*, it enjoyed a considerable amount of favour. The mounting of it was superb. The scene in the Temple of *Artemis*, in which *Synorix* at the very moment of his triumph, when the laurel wreath binds his brow and love seems to crown his hopes, is destroyed by the

woman who seemed to yield to his will only to complete her revenge, was a remarkable picture. The temple looked like a solid piece of architecture ; and the huge figure of the goddess, the grouping of the worshippers, the invocation and the thunderclap which witnessed Camma's appeal, gave a much more vivid impression of the solemnity of the old heathen rites than can be derived from any description, no matter how eloquent it may be. The Cup, being a short play, was acted in conjunction with *The Corsican Brothers* until April 9. The *Belle's Stratagem* replaced the latter on the 16th, with Irving in his old part of Doricourt and Miss Terry as Letitia Hardy. Mrs. Cowley's comedy was acted until May, in conjunction with *The Cup*. Then came one of the finest moments in the managerial career of Henry Irving. Edwin Booth had been playing at the Princess's Theatre—another slough of despond, at that time, in theatrical property—and the business management, which is so largely answerable for the commercial success of the playhouse, was sadly deficient. The season was not a success, and the lessee of the Lyceum invited his distinguished American brother in art to play in Wellington Street.

In accordance with this arrangement, *Othello* was given at the Lyceum on May 2, with Edwin Booth as the Moor, Irving as Iago, and Miss Terry as Desdemona ; and, on May 9, the two actors changed parts, Irving acting *Othello* to the Iago of Booth. The contrast in method presented by the two actors who thus alternated these great characters was remarkable, and the event proved supremely interesting. The Desdemona of Miss Terry was undoubtedly one of her most graceful and winning performances, but, naturally, the character did not afford the same scope as

Ophelia and Portia. Apart from the trio of theatrical artists of the first rank who were now to be seen playing together, the general representation was excellent in every



Edwin Booth.

way. Othello was acted on the Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays in each week, The Cup and The Belle's Stratagem making up the bill on the intervening nights. Hamlet was again revived on June 18, thirteen perform-

ances of the tragedy being given. The season—which was remarkable for its variety—concluded with representations of *The Bells*, *The Belle's Stratagem*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Eugene Aram*, and *Charles the First*. The hundred and ninety performances of *The Corsican Brothers* have already been noted. *The Cup* was played one hundred and twenty-seven times, *The Belle's Stratagem* thirty-six, and *Othello* twenty-two. The actor-manager's benefit and last night of the season occurred on July 23, *The Bells* being the chief piece of the evening. Mr. Toole also contributed to the programme, and appeared in *The Birthplace of Podgers*, Mr. John Hollingshead's well-known farce, which Mr. Toole had acted, on the same stage and for the first time, on March 6, 1858. On this occasion, the popular comedian was supported by members of his own company, including Mr. John Billington, Mr. E. W. Garden, Mr. George Shelton, Miss Effie Liston, Miss Eliza Johnstone, and Miss Emily Thorne. The well-known scene from *The Hunchback*, in which Modus abandons Ovid's *Art of Love* for the practical—and delightful—instruction of Helen, revealed Henry Irving in a light comedy part in which he was particularly brilliant and it enabled Miss Terry to display that vivacity and archness which are part of her nature.

The theatre was then closed to the public for five months, during which time important structural alterations were made by Henry Irving, who had acquired, in addition to the lease of the theatre for a lengthy period, four houses adjoining.

The Lyceum re-opened with *Two Roses* on December 26, with Henry Irving as Digby Grant, the late David James as Our Mr. Jenkins, Miss Winifred Emery, William

Terriss, Mr. Thomas Thorne, and other popular players in the cast. There was much curiosity to see the Hamlet and Shylock of the day in a character in which he had won such success eleven years previously, and of which he gave a finished study, but the play had become a trifle old-fashioned and it was felt that the work was hardly



Henry Irving as Digby Grant.

"A little cheque!"

"You annoy me very much."

worthy of the actor who had interpreted Shakespeare so splendidly. Albery's comedy—in the Lyceum revival of which Mr. George Alexander, as Caleb Deecie, made his first appearance on the London stage—was, however, played sixty times. The Captain of the Watch was acted in conjunction with Albery's comedy, Miss Helen Matthews making her first appearance at the Lyceum in Planche's comedietta.

Two Roses was followed, on March 8, 1882, by Romeo

and Juliet. In his preface to the acting edition of the tragedy, Mr. Henry Irving announced that he had availed himself of every resource at his command in order to perfectly illustrate the warmth and glow of the play. He had prepared the text most carefully, giving a prominent place, among the restored portions, to Romeo's unrequited love for Rosaline, which Garrick had omitted from his version, and the value of which can hardly be over-appreciated in view of its bearing on Romeo's character. The revival was notable for its succession of stage-pictures of wonderful beauty, and the fight between the partisans of the opposing houses presented a stage-crowd to perfection. Romeo is not a character which is calculated to display to their best advantage the abilities of an actor who is capable of embodying the highest parts in the intellectual drama. Irving's best scenes were the fight with Tybalt, his passionate acting when Romeo hears of his banishment, and the scene with the apothecary. The latter was a highly impressive and, in its foreshadowing of the tragic close, was somewhat akin to a similar piece of acting which playgoers of a later date than 1882 well remember in the last act of *Becket*. Miss Terry's Juliet was full of girlish charm and simple grace. The lightness of touch in the scene where the old Nurse provokes Juliet by her delay in coming to the point with the news of Romeo, was the perfection of delicate comedy. In the later scenes, if Miss Terry did not "tear a passion to tatters" in the approved method of stage Juliets, she plainly showed the horror which any woman of tender age would be likely to exhibit in a similar situation. The fine embodiment of the Nurse by the late Mrs. Stirling was a character-study of much value artistically, and one that was vastly popular; while the revival



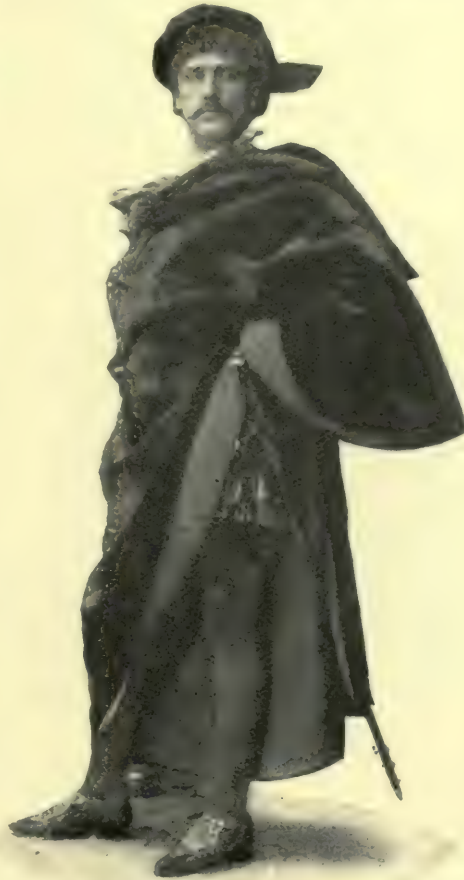
Miss Ellen Terry as Juliet ; Mrs. Stirling as the Nurse.

was further strengthened by the manly impersonation of Mercutio by William Terriss.

The estimation in which this revival was held by the public is proved by the length of its run in a large theatre. The tragedy was acted from March 8 to July 29, the last night of the season. It was reproduced on September 2, and played until October 7, one hundred and sixty-one performances having been given with only the break of five weeks in the summer. On the occasion of the one hundredth performance of *Romeo and Juliet*, a banquet was given on the stage of the theatre, and the Earl of Lytton delivered the following most interesting testimony to the merits of the revival :—

“In the course of his brilliant career as an actor, Mr. Irving has sustained many characters. In all of them he will be long and admirably remembered; but in none of them has he established a more general and permanent claim to our gratitude than in the character by which he is so worthily known to us as the illustrious successor of my lamented friend, the late Mr. Macready, in the beneficent task of restoring to the British stage its ancient and now prolific alliance with the literature and poetry of our country. Speaking here as the son of an English writer, who was not unconnected with the stage, and who, were he still living, would, I am sure, be worthily interested in the success of Mr. Irving’s noble undertaking, and gratefully acknowledge, in all that tends to record and confirm such an alliance, the promise of a threefold benefit :—A benefit to our national literature, because, without it, that literature would remain comparatively barren or undeveloped in one of the highest departments of imaginative writing. A benefit to our national stage, because without it the genius of our actors, when seeking opportunities for the expression of its highest powers in the performance of great parts and great plays, must remain dependent more or less upon the dramatic productions, either of former generations or foreign countries. And a benefit to our national society, because there is no surer test of the relative place to be assigned to any modern community in a state of social civilisation than the intellectual character of its public amusements; and in elevating these you exalt the whole community.

Now, I feel sure you will agree with me that no living English actor has done more in this direction than Mr. Irving; and he has done it not by sacrificing all other conditions of dramatic effect to the display of his own idiosyncrasy as an actor, but by associating his peculiar powers as an actor with a rarely cultivated and thoughtful study of that harmonious unity of dramatic impressions which is essential to the high order of dramatic performances. Mr. Irving's eminence as an actor needs from me no individual recognition. It has long ago been established, and in connection with its latest manifestation, it has been re-affirmed with enthusiasm with a popular verdict, which supersedes all personal comment. But there is one characteristic of his talents which



William Terriss as Mercutio.

has, I think, been specially conducive to its popularity. It requires a great actor to perform a great part, just as it requires a great author to write one. But it requires, I think, from a great actor certain special and uncommon powers to enable him to throw the

whole force of his mind creatively into every detail of a great play ; giving to the pervading vital spirit of it an adequately complete, appropriate, and yet original embodiment. This peculiar quality of Mr. Irving's mind and management has been conspicuously revealed in his conception and production of the play, whose 100th performance at this theatre we celebrate to-night. Now, though *Romeo and Juliet* is one of the most poetic, it is certainly one of the least dramatic of Shakespeare's tragedies. To us its main charm and interest must always be poetic rather than dramatic. Even in the versification of it



Henry Irving as Benedick.

Shakespeare has adopted, as he has adopted in no other drama, forms peculiar to the early love-poetry of Italy and Provence. Its true *dramatis personæ* are not mere mortal Montagues and Capulets, they are those beautiful immortals, love and youth, in an ideal land of youth and love—and those delicate embodiments of a passionate romance Shakespeare has surrounded with a scenery and invested with an atmosphere of sensuous beauty. This atmosphere is the only medium through which we can view them in their true poetic, perspective, and right relation to that imaginary world in which alone they naturally breathe and move and have their being. But it is this subtle atmosphere of surrounding beauty which

invariably and inevitably escapes in the ordinary stage performance of the play, and it is, I conceive, the surpassing merits of Mr. Irving's conception and treatment of the play to have restored to it, or rather to have given for the first time to its stage performance, the indefinable pervading charm, of what I can only call its natural poetic climate. In the production of this result he has successfully employed, no doubt, scenic effects, which attest a creative imagination of no common force and sweetness. But the result is by no means due to scenic effect alone. Did time allow, I think I could trace it through numerous details of singular delicacy to the unobtrusive and pervading influence of an original mind upon the whole arrangement and performance of the play, and we should indeed be ungrateful for the pleasure it has

given us, if we forgot, on this occasion, how largely that pleasure is due to the refined and graceful exercise of such charming talents as those which delighted us in the acting of Miss Terry and Mrs. Stirling, and to the general intelligence of all who have supported Mr. Irving in thus successfully carrying out his own brilliant conception of the play."

Popular as was the success of *Romeo and Juliet*, that public approval was exceeded in the case of the revival, on October 11, of *Much Ado About Nothing*, which immediately followed. For in this production there was absolutely nothing to disturb the equanimity of



Miss Ellen Terry as Beatrice.

the most censorious critic. The play was as fresh to the audiences of twenty-one years ago as though it had been a modern comedy, while the Benedick of Henry Irving and the Beatrice of Ellen Terry were Shakespearean impersonations which have not been excelled in the range of high comedy by any other actor or actress. Incomparable acting on the part of the representatives of Benedick and Beatrice,

enriched by a background of appropriate scenery and costumes, made this as complete a Shakespearean representation as the stage has ever shown. A series of harmonious pictures brought to the spectator the very atmosphere of Messina ; but the spirit of the play was always kept in mind. The scenery, indeed, was merely an adjunct to the performance, and not even in the church, with its massive pillars, decorated roof, and costly altar, was the attention distracted from the most dramatic incident in the play. It was admitted on all hands that the incisive humour of Irving was of the greatest advantage to the part of Benedick, and the radiance of Miss Terry as Beatrice makes the memory of that brilliant impersonation a happy and abiding recollection indeed. The comedy would certainly have run to full houses for many months—so great was the hold which it had taken on the public—but that the first engagement of Henry Irving and Miss Ellen Terry in America made it necessary to withdraw *Much Ado About Nothing* in the height of its success and after two hundred and twelve consecutive performances. The other plays which were to be presented in the United States were given before the close of the season, and, in all cases, with just as much care as though they were intended for lengthy runs. These farewell performances commenced with *The Lyons Mail*, on June 2, with Miss Terry for the first time in the comparatively small part of Jeannette. *The Bells* was revived on June 9; *Charles the First* was given on June 30; *Hamlet*, on July 11; *The Merchant of Venice*, on July 16; *Eugene Aram*—compressed into one act—and *The Belle's Stratagem*, on July 19; and *Louis XI.*, on July 23. It should also be set down that, on the afternoon of June 14, in



The Church Scene in *Much Ado About Nothing*.

Beatrice, Miss Ellen Terry ; Claudio, Forbes Robertson ; Hero, Miss Millward ; Don Pedro, William Terriss ;
Benedick, Henry Irving.

aid of the funds of the Royal College of Music, Irving resumed an old character, Robert Macaire, Mr. Toole being the Jacques Strop. Scenes from *Money* and from *Iolanthe*—the Gilbert and Sullivan opera—were also played.

The season was brought to a close with the actor-manager's benefit on Saturday, July 28. This was a



Miss Ellen Terry as Letitia Hardy.

memorable evening in the annals of dramatic art, and one never to be forgotten by those who had the good fortune to be present. As a student of the stage, I count myself happy in having been among the audience on this historical evening. The programme was opened with the condensed Eugene Aram, with, it need hardly be said, Henry Irving as the conscience-stricken schoolmaster, and Miss

Terry as Ruth Meadows; Mr. Herbert Reeves sang, Mr. Toole once more gave his popular sketch, *Trying a Magistrate*; and Sims Reeves rendered, with wonderful power and effect, *The Death of Nelson* and *Then You'll Remember Me*. After this came *The Belle's Stratagem*, compressed for this occasion into two acts, with Irving as Doricourt and Miss Terry as Letitia Hardy. But every spectator felt that the real event of the evening was yet to come. The curtain

had scarcely fallen upon Mrs. Cowley's comedy ere the audience, animated by one feeling, gave vent to their pent-up excitement in loud shouts of "Irving, Irving." The stage was deluged with wreaths and bouquets in the midst of which Henry Irving presently appeared. The actor was still in his costume as Doricourt, but without the wig, looking very pale and evidently much affected by the affectionate greeting. When the cheers had subsided, he advanced to the footlights and spoke as follows:—

"Ladies and Gentlemen,—I have often had to say 'Good-bye' to you on occasions like this, but never has the task been so difficult as it is to-night, for we are about to have a longer separation than we have ever had before. Soon an ocean will roll between us, and it will be a long, long time before we can hear your heart-stirring cheers again. It is some consolation, though, to think that we shall carry with us across the Atlantic the goodwill of many friends who are here to-night, as well as of many who are absent. Here—in this theatre—have we watched the growth of your great and generous sympathy with our work, which has been more than rewarded by the abundance of your regard, and you will believe me when I say, I acutely feel this parting with those who have so steadily and staunchly sustained me in my career. Not for myself alone I speak, but on behalf of my comrades, and especially for Miss Ellen Terry. Her regret at parting with you is equal to mine. You will, I am sure, miss her—as she will certainly miss you. But we have our return to look forward to, and it will be a great pride to us to come back with the stamp of the favour and goodwill of the American people, which, believe me, we shall not fail to obtain. The 2nd of next June will, I hope, see us home with you again. We shall have acted in America for six months, from October 29 to the 29th of the following April, during which time we shall have played in some forty cities. Before our departure we shall appear in Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Liverpool, from whence we start upon our expedition. This theatre will not be closed long; for on the 1st of September a lady will appear before you whose beauty and talent have made her the favourite of America from Maine to California—Miss Mary Anderson—a lady to whom I am sure you will give the heartiest English welcome—that is a foregone conclusion. You will, I know, extend the same welcome to my friend Lawrence Barrett, the

famous American actor, who will appear here in the early part of next year. It is a delight to me, as it must have been to you, to have had my friend Sims Reeves here to-night, and I hope that the echo of the words so beautifully sung by him will linger in your memories, and that you *will* remember me ; and it has also been a great delight to have had my old friend Toole and my young friend Herbert Reeves here to-night. At all times it is a happy thing to be surrounded by friends, and especially on such an occasion as this. And now, ladies and gentlemen, I must say 'Good-bye.' I can but hope that in our absence some of you will miss us ; and I hope that when we return you will be here, or some few of you at least, to welcome us back. From one and all to one and all, with full and grateful and hopeful hearts, I wish you lovingly and respectfully 'Good-bye.'

Words are almost useless to describe the scene which followed. The band played Auld Lang Syne, and the curtain was again raised disclosing the entire Lyceum company on the stage, a sight which caused the great audience to burst into an extraordinary tumult of enthusiasm. "Handkerchiefs," as I wrote at the time, "waved in unbroken lines from floor to roof. No such spectacle has been witnessed in a theatre by this generation. Mr. Irving might well have felt that he had no more triumphs to win ; for such a tribute of enthusiastic affection would fill up the measure of the most exacting ambition." But many years more of triumph were to be his in the United States of America and in Canada as well as in Great Britain.

During the absence of Henry Irving and Miss Terry, the Lyceum was occupied by Miss Mary Anderson and the late Lawrence Barrett respectively. Miss Anderson, who "had enjoyed eight seasons of steadily-increasing prosperity on the American stage" before she came to England, made her first appearance here on September 1, 1883, as Parthenia, in Mrs. Lovell's play, Ingomar, her

season extending to April 5, 1884. During that time she also played—with remarkable success—Galatea, in Mr. W. S. Gilbert's *Pygmalion and Galatea*, and Clarice in the same author's one-act drama, *Comedy and Tragedy*, which was performed, for the first time, on January 26. It was written especially for Miss Anderson. The plot of this drama has been thus related: "The Duc d'Orléans has made overtures to a married woman, Clarice. His advances at last become so unbearable that she prevails on her husband, d'Aulnay, to challenge the duke. She has a party of friends at her house, and, while the duel is going on, she, to keep their attention fixed, gives them proof of her powers both as a comic and as a tragic actress. The doors have been locked, but presently she hears the clash of swords. The assumed part she is playing has become one of reality. She fears for her husband's life, and entreats that the door leading to the garden may be unlocked. Her entreaties are looked upon as the very perfection of acting, and are readily applauded, but at the same time her woman's heart is being rung with agony at the encounter to the death which is going on outside. At length the door is opened and d'Aulnay is able to tell her that the duke has paid the penalty of his libertinism." Miss Anderson, who acted superbly as Clarice, was supported by Mr. George Alexander as d'Aulnay and Mr. J. H. Barnes as the duke. Miss Anderson was followed at the Lyceum by Lawrence Barrett, the second American actor of note to grace the Lyceum stage. He began his brief season on April 12, 1884, in *Yorick's Love*, an adaptation from the Spanish, by W. D. Howells. He brought with him a capital company including the late Louis James and Miss Marie Wainwright.

Henry Irving and Miss Ellen Terry, it should be recorded, arrived in New York Harbour, prior to commencing their first tour of the United States, on October 21, 1883. On the 29th of that month, *The Bells* was acted, at the Star Theatre, New York, and, on the following evening, October 30, Charles the First introduced Miss Terry to an American audience. The other plays presented during the first season in New York were *Louis XI.*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Lyons Mail*, and *The Belle's Stratagem*. *Much Ado About Nothing* was reserved for the second visit to New York, in March, 1884. The success of that tour was a fitting recognition of the good work done for the stage by Henry Irving. The *Times* thus summed up the situation: "Mr. Irving has vindicated for his vocation a definite position among the serious arts. He has been accepted in the United States with distinguished honour in virtue of his championship of the right and duty of the dramatic art to be a fine art. The remarkable success he has achieved is a gratifying sign of the willingness of public opinion in America to co-operate with that of England to rescue the stage from the lower level to which it has sometimes sunk."

CHAPTER XIII

1884-1888

Much Ado About Nothing again—Twelfth Night revived—Illness of Miss Ellen Terry—Miss Marion Terry plays Viola—Miss Mary Anderson revives Romeo and Juliet—The Lady of Lyons—Hamlet again revived—The booking of the pit—Revival of Olivia—An American critic's opinion thereon—Production of Faust—A run of three hundred and ninety-six nights—Sarah Bernhardt at the Lyceum—Werner—The Amber Heart—Henry Irving and Miss Terry leave for their third American tour—Miss Mary Anderson revives The Winter's Tale—A long run—Miss Anderson's last season at the Lyceum.

THE brilliant career of *Much Ado About Nothing*, which was interrupted in 1883 by the tour in America, was resumed on the return of Henry Irving and Miss Terry. The comedy was played from May 31 until July 5, 1884, two hundred and forty-three performances at the Lyceum having then been given. On the 8th of the latter month it was replaced by another Shakespearean production, *Twelfth Night*. The poetical beauty of the revival was beyond all question, but the representation was not received with that favour which was now characteristic of a first-night at the Lyceum. Not a single sign of discontent was manifest during the performance,

but when the curtain had fallen on the last act and the actor-manager had been called for the usual speech, the applause was not as general as might have been expected. In the words of the *Daily Telegraph*, which described the strange scene, "scarcely had Mr. Irving concluded his opening sentences before he was continually interrupted by a very determined minority. At once he seized the occasion and instantly changed the tenour of his remarks. Candidly owning that he had been away some time from England, and was not quite accustomed to the altered attitude of first-night audiences, he owned to feeling in the house the existence of a 'strange element,' which he did not understand. He was perplexed and puzzled at the possibility of any opposition in the face of what had been done and what had been seen. Naturally, these home thrusts secured a storm of applause. Sixteen elaborate scenes, many of great beauty, had been presented in the course of the evening. There had been no hitches or waits, and all was over considerably before half-past eleven. Many of the artists selected were, no doubt, not beyond criticism, but there was obviously nothing to hiss at. As the applause grew louder, Mr. Irving warmed with his subject. He loyally defended the company that supported him. He declared that they one and all possessed the three cardinal virtues which should be the mainspring of the actor's life. He praised their devotion and fidelity. He pointed to the fact that he had produced six plays by Shakespeare, and hoped that the sixteenth would go, and be acted, nearly as well as this, and he concluded with a few pregnant sentences from the text he had just delivered, sarcastically alluding to the way in which merriment should be taken on and off the stage. The

speech was *à propos*, and in excellent taste, and the tact of it instantly silenced the discontented minority."

The play was taken in too high a spirit in this revival to secure a popular success. Rollicking humour and mere animal spirits had no place in it. "Mr. Irving may probably claim to be the best Malvolio the stage has seen," said Mr. Joseph Knight; and the sententious humour of the character was never so strongly marked as in this impersonation. But, as I think, the actor created over-much sympathy for the ill-used steward and so unintentionally turned comedy into tragedy, much, no doubt, to the disappointment of a certain section of the audience. Malvolio's line, "I'll be revenged on the whole pack of you," moved to pity rather than laughter. Miss Ellen Terry's Viola, on the other hand, left no room for doubt. It was set, in the words of the journal just quoted, "in a most enchanting key. It is tender, human, graceful, consistently picturesque, and with humour as light as feather-down. It will be reckoned among the very best performances of this clever lady, and it grows upon the spectators as the play proceeds. Few will forget the surprising effect Miss Terry made in such lines as that to Olivia when she unveils :—

‘Excellently done, if God did it all.’

It was the very conceit of graceful impudence. Or again, that to Olivia :—

‘I see you what you are, you are too proud.
But if you were the devil, you are fair.’

Or again, to Malvolio :—

‘None of my lord’s ring ! Why, he sent her none.
I am the man.’

Every one of these delicate touches of humour the audience

instantly appreciated and rewarded with a round of applause. The duel with Sir Andrew is also admirably done, with its boyish petulance and obvious terror at the sight of the sword blade. In the hands of anyone but an artist, how vulgar and commonplace such a scene may be made! Here Miss Ellen Terry delighted everybody. It was an admirable blending of poetic fancy and enforced humour. Of its grace and symmetry of design we need say nothing."

After a few nights, the unfortunate illness of Miss Ellen Terry prevented her from appearing again as Viola, her place in the company being filled by her sister, Miss Marion Terry, who played in *Twelfth Night* until the end of the run. The season terminated on August 28, with *Richelieu*. Prior to that, there were two performances of *The Bells* and of *Louis XI*. During the absence in America of Henry Irving and Miss Terry, the Lyceum was again occupied—from November 1, 1884, to April 25 1885—by Miss Mary Anderson, who revived *Romeo and Juliet*, with much splendour, on the former date, Mr. Terriss being the *Romeo* and Mrs. Stirling the *Nurse*. On April 9, Miss Anderson appeared as *Pauline* in *The Lady of Lyons* to the *Claude Melnotte* of Mr. Terriss. *Pygmalion and Galatea* and *Comedy and Tragedy* were played on the last night of Miss Anderson's season.

After their second tour across the Atlantic—which began at the Opera House, Quebec, on September 30, 1884, and terminated at the Star Theatre, New York, on April 4, 1885—Henry Irving and Miss Terry reappeared at the Lyceum on May 2, in the latter year, in *Hamlet*. Apart from the return of the chief players and the Lyceum company, the occasion was memorable by reason of the introduction of reserved seats in the pit and gallery, an accession,



Henry Irving as Hamlet.

as it might have been thought, to the comfort of the public. As events turned out, however, the idea was not received with favour, and, although the question had been frequently mooted since 1885, no other manager has tried the experiment of booking the seats in the cheaper parts of the play-house. It almost goes without saying that the Hamlet of the evening was greeted with an enthusiastic welcome. He was applauded to the echo when he first stepped upon the stage. Hands were clapped until their owners fairly wearied, ladies waved their handkerchiefs aloft, while many persons allowed their feelings so far to run away with them that they jumped upon their seats in the excess of excitement. A welcome equally spontaneous and hearty was extended to Miss Ellen Terry. Calls were enthusiastically made and oft repeated for both players. Indeed, so glad were several of the spectators to see their favourites again that bouquets were thrown at most inopportune moments. All was, however, taken in good part by the majority of the audience, the play being listened to throughout with the utmost attention. At the close of the tragedy, an extraordinary scene occurred. Henry Irving and Miss Terry had, in response to loud and prolonged calls, presented themselves before the curtain; and, the actor-manager, being once more called, set about addressing the audience. It was with some little difficulty that he gained a hearing for the first few words of his speech. "Hamlet," he observed, "has just now said, 'The rest is silence,' but you don't seem to be entirely of that opinion," a remark which was received with cheers mingled with groans. "I am pleased," he continued, "to have an opportunity of saying how glad and happy you have made me to-night. You have given us a welcome which has found an echo in our

hearts. The ever-ready kindness and affectionate greeting which we received in that country from which we have just returned can never be effaced from our memories ; yet, you will believe us when we say we are rejoiced to see you once again at home. (A voice : Don't go away again.) It is my intention, after one or two short revivals, to stage Mr. Wills's play of *Olivia*, which I hope will remain in the bills for a night or two. What I shall do afterwards must remain a profound secret—for it is a secret even to me." He then said that the company would not play in the country this year, but that the theatre would be closed in August, re-opening in September. "In the meantime," he added, "the theatre will be redecorated, and I will do all in my power to consult the comfort and convenience of my patrons." The latter part of this speech was the signal for an outburst of applause, and a counter demonstration immediately set in. "Where's the pit?" "Shut up the booking-office!" "No numbered seats," and similar cries were responded to with shouts of "Sit down," "Be quiet, pittites!" "Let him speak," and so on. All was confusion for a few moments, and the actor, proclaiming himself to be entirely in the hands of the audience, and stating that the only profit that could arise from the new arrangement of booking the pit and gallery seats was the knowledge that it pleased the public, surveyed the scene with an amused and puzzled expression. The confusing sounds still continuing, he remarked : "You see I can't exactly tell whether the new or old arrangements have it." The discussion, which was carried on all through in a good-humoured spirit of banter, was evidently not to be decided then and there, so the speech was concluded with the following few words and a felicitous quotation :—

"I will be guided entirely by your wishes, in token of which I think I can quote no better words than those of the play which you have just heard :—

'And what so poor a man as Hamlet is
May do to express his love and friendship to you,
God-willing, shall not lack.'"

The well-intentioned effort to promote the comfort of the occupants of the pit and gallery was abandoned after a month, the earliest possible moment, as the pit had been booked for four weeks. Before the revival of *Olivia*, *Louis XI.* was given on May 9, *The Merchant of Venice* on the 11th, and *The Bells* on the 16th.

Prior to the production of *Olivia* at the Lyceum, the play was generally declared to be "too small" for so large a stage. There were many who thought that the simple story of the pastor and his betrayed daughter was hardly of sufficient strength to secure the sympathies of an audience accustomed to plays of a far more exciting nature. The drama which had succeeded so well in a small theatre was considered by many wiseacres to be a little unfitted for the larger house. That Miss Ellen Terry was the most delightful of *Olivias* was a matter of common knowledge to all playgoers of the time. But doubts were openly expressed as to the fitness of the play itself for the Lyceum. All misgivings, however, on this point were set at rest by the revival of the stage-poem on May 27, and the subsequent success of *Olivia* on the tours of Henry Irving and Miss Terry in the United States of America fully justified the Lyceum production of the play. *Olivia* was written by W. G. Wills and first brought out at the Court Theatre, on March 30, 1878, by Mr. John Hare.

"The hero of this piece," wrote Oliver Goldsmith, "unites in himself the three greatest characters upon earth; he is a priest, an husbandman, and the father of a family. He is drawn as ready to teach and ready to obey; as simple in affluence, and majestic in adversity. In this age of opulence and refinement whom can such a character please? Such as are fond of high life, will turn with disdain from the simplicity of his country fireside. Such as mistake ribaldry for humour, will find no wit in his harmless conversation; and such as have been taught to deride religion, will laugh at one whose chief stores of comfort are drawn from futurity." These words are just as applicable now as they were when written in 1766. Such a simple and homely story as is here presented does not appeal to all classes, nor is it specially adapted for transferring, as it stands, to the stage. Hence other versions of it have not secured much fame. In 1819, a burletta, or opera, founded on the novel, and called *The Vicar of Wakefield*, was produced by Thomas Dibdin, at the Surrey Theatre, and made a fair success; but another version, brought out at the Haymarket, on September 27, 1823, was only played for two nights. In the latter, Daniel Terry appeared as Dr. Primrose, Liston was the Moses, and Miss Chester the Olivia. In March, 1850, a version by Tom Taylor was given at the Strand. In the following month, a two-act adaptation by J. Stirling Coyne was presented at the Haymarket Theatre with Benjamin Webster as Dr. Primrose, Mrs. Keeley as Mrs. Primrose, George Vandenhoff as Squire Thornhill, and Miss Reynolds as Olivia. The elder Farren (1786-1861), famous as Lord Ogleby in the *Clandestine Marriage*, was a celebrated Dr. Primrose. By far the most successful adaptation of the

story is that written by W. G. Wills and known the world over as Olivia.

Miss Ellen Terry was the original Olivia, the character which she now resumed at the Lyceum, in the Court



Miss Ellen Terry as Olivia.

Theatre production. In those days, as in the later performances at the Lyceum, Miss Terry suppressed something of the pertness and variety of Olivia's character, while giving prominence to her confiding innocence. "The temporary hesitation and distrust of her lover's rakish language are, nevertheless, distinctly and

finely marked. Mr. Wills has introduced," said a contemporary critic in 1878, "a pretty and touching scene in which Olivia takes leave of her family one by one, bestowing small presents and many kisses on the little ones; and herein the simple feeling of the actress was touching to a high degree. The crowning scene, however, is that in

the inn, where by an irresistible impulse, Olivia is seen to thrust from her violently, with both hands, the man who has outraged, betrayed, and insulted her."

In the opinion of Mr. William Winter, the doyen of American critics, who was present at the first night of the revival at the Lyceum in 1885, Miss Terry then excelled in another scene. "There was one instant," he wrote, "in the second act of the play, when the woman's heart has at length yielded to her lover's will, and he himself, momentarily dismayed by his own conquest,



Henry Irving as Dr. Primrose.

strives to turn back, that Ellen Terry made pathetic beyond description. The words she spoke are simply these, 'But I said I would come!' What language could do justice to the voice, to the manner, to the sweet, confiding, absolute abandonment of the whole nature to the human love by which it had been conquered? The whole of that per-

formance was astonishing, was thrilling with knowledge of the passion of love. That especial moment was the supreme beauty of it. At such times, human nature is irradiated by a divine fire and art fulfils its purpose." The same writer describes Henry Irving's impersonation of Dr. Primrose as "equally a triumph of expression and ideal; not only flowing out of goodness, but flowing smoothly and producing the effect of nature. It was not absolutely and identically the Vicar that Goldsmith has drawn, for its personality was unmarked by either rusticity or strong humour; but it was a kindred and higher type of the simple truth, the pastoral sweetness, the benignity, and the human tenderness of that delightful original. To invest goodness with charm, to make virtue piquant, and to turn common events of domestic life to exquisite pathos and noble exaltation, was the actor's purpose. It was accomplished; and Dr. Primrose, hitherto an idyllic figure, existent only in the chambers of fancy, is henceforth as much a denizen of the stage as Luke Fielding or Jesse Rural; a man not merely to be read of, as one reads of Uncle Toby and Parson Adams, but to be known, remembered, and loved." Olivia had a run of one hundred and thirty-five nights on its first revival at the Lyceum.

The great dramatic event of the year 1885 was the production, on December 19, of the version, by the adaptor of Olivia and author of *Charles the First*, of *Faust*. That Henry Irving succeeded in conquering the apparently insurmountable difficulties of placing Goethe's poem upon the stage in a poetic and yet dramatic spirit—that is to say, in adapting the work to the requirements of the theatre—was but another triumph of his art. Not even in Germany, much less in France and England, had anything

approaching this beautiful production been accomplished. Even that master of stage-craft, Mr. W. S. Gilbert, recognised the difficulties of an attempt to dramatise the poem, and was forced to remodel the story in his play, *Gretchen*, acted at the Olympic Theatre on May 24, 1879. In support of his views, Mr. Gilbert quoted Schlegel, who says that "to represent the Faustus of Goethe, one must possess Faustus's magic staff and his formulæ of conjuration." The same critic, it may be added, also observes that Goethe's work "purposely runs out in all directions beyond the dimensions of the theatre. In many scenes the action stands quite still, and they consist wholly of long soliloquies, or conversations, delineating Faustus's internal conditions and dispositions, and the development of his reflections on the insufficiency of human knowledge, and the unsatisfactory lot of human nature; other scenes,



Miss Ellen Terry as Margaret.

although in themselves extremely ingenious and significant, nevertheless, in regard to the progress of the action, possess an incidental appearance. . . . Some scenes, full of the highest energy and overpowering pathos, for example, the murder of Valentine, and Margaret and Faustus in the dungeon, prove that the poet was a complete master of stage effect, and that he merely sacrificed it for the sake of more comprehensive views. He makes frequent demands

upon the imagination of his readers ; nay, he compels them, by way of background for his flying groups, to supply immense movable pictures such as no theatrical art is capable of bringing before the eye." So much for Schlegel, who is at great pains to prove what no one would dream of disputing, namely, the impossibility of representing in the theatre the whole of Goethe's tragedy as it is written. Obviously, such a task would be quite beyond accomplishment. The vital point in connection with this matter is the possibility, in adapting Goethe to the stage, of preserving the essence, the meaning of the original ; and herein, Henry Irving, aided by Mr. Wills, succeeded beyond all question. The tragedy was transplanted from the study to the stage in a manner equally impressive, poetical, and, from the point of view of the ordinary playgoer, highly effective. The actor manager stated that it was his desire to draw attention to Goethe's poem. This object was certainly accomplished—as was proved by the enormous demand for translations of Goethe which instantly arose—and, moreover, it was attained by admirable means. A tragedy, not written for the theatre, was so skilfully treated by the adaptor of it and by the actors of the chief parts, that it became a drama of intense human interest, attractive alike to student and playgoer, to the book-worm and to the patron of the stall and gallery. It was found that all that was possible had been retained of the original, that nothing incidental to the story had been omitted, while the adaptation was set in a framework at once rich, grand, and full of poetical feeling. From a merely spectacular point of view, it was a magnificent production, the beauty of Margaret's garden and the weird splendour of the broken scene being stage-pictures of great moment.

The play was admirably interpreted. The Mephistopheles of Henry Irving was then a performance of singular attractiveness in its fine humour as in its sinister aspect, but, remarkable as it was in 1884, it ripened with years, and, as we shall see later on, it was a consummate piece of acting in the last revival of Faust. As for the Margaret of Miss Ellen Terry, it was an impersonation of infinite grace, surcharged with pathos and of high poetical value. The beauty of her acting throughout, but more especially in the scene where Margaret discovers the jewels and in the subsequent scenes with Faust, can never be forgotten by those who witnessed the first Lyceum production of the tragedy. Faust had a career of prosperity in London, the provinces,

and America, which has not been equalled—let alone excelled—by any other serious play. It was played for the 244th time on November 15, 1886, when new scenes—the student's cellar and the witches' kitchen—were introduced. Faust was acted until July 15, 1887, when the three hundred and ninety-sixth representation at the Lyceum was given, the season terminating on the following evening with *The Merchant of Venice*. On the 18th,



Mr. George Alexander as Faust.

Madame Sarah Bernhardt began a short season, during which she played Theodora, La Dame aux Camélias, Fédora, and Adrienne Lecouvreur. During 1886—on July 24—Miss Ellen Terry, it should be added, appeared for the first time as Peggy in *Raising the Wind*. This was at a special performance in aid of the Actors' Benevolent Fund. The bills announced that "their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales have graciously signified their intention of being present." Kenney's farce followed *The Bells*, both plays being given "for this night only," Irving, of course, being the Mathias and the Jeremy Diddler.

The vogue which Goethe's work attained through the production of the Lyceum *Faust* is proved by the following statement which appeared in the *Saturday Review* of July 17, 1886:—"The attraction of *Faust* remains unabated at the Lyceum, and, what is not always implied in such a fact, the performance not only maintains, but has even increased, its claim upon the public favour. It is computed, we believe, that upwards of one hundred thousand translations of *Faust* have been sold by various booksellers since this piece began its run" [seven months previous to this notice]; "and Mr. Irving may boast to have done more to popularise that work of genius in this country than all the innumerable books, essays, and articles that have ever been devoted to it."

An interesting event took place on the afternoon of June 1, 1887, when Byron's tragedy, *Werner*, was played for the testimonial benefit of Dr. Westland Marston. The play was arranged for the occasion in four acts, and it is only necessary to set down that Henry Irving was the gloomy count, Miss Ellen Terry the Josephine, Mr. George

Alexander the Ulric, and Miss Winifred Emery the Ida Stralenheim. Another performance of exceptional prominence at the time was that of *The Amber Heart*, a "poetical fancy" in three acts by Mr. Alfred C. Calmour.



Miss Ellen Terry as Peggy.

It was acted on the afternoon of June 7 by a cast of unusual importance:—Silvio, Mr. H. Beerbohm Tree; Geoffrey, Mr. Frank Tyars; Ranulf, Mr. Allen Beaumont; Sir Simon Gamba, Mr. Henry Kemble; Coranto, Mr. E. S. Willard; Mirabelle, Miss Cissy Grahame; Cesta,

Miss Helen Forsyth ; Katrona, Miss M. A. Giffard ; and Ellaline, Miss Ellen Terry. The play, which combined the pretty and the fantastic, owed its first success to the remarkable interpretation which it received at the hands of Miss Terry, Ellaline being one of the most charming performances ever given by that gifted actress. Placed in the regular Lyceum bill on May 23, 1888—with Mr. George Alexander and Mr. Hermann Vezin in the parts taken respectively by Mr. Tree and Mr. Willard—it was received well by the general public and enjoyed a fair measure of prosperity. But it was not long, or strong, enough to fill the entire programme, and it was therefore played in conjunction with Robert Macaire—with Henry Irving again in the title-*rôle* and Mr. Weedon Grossmith as Jacques Strop.

But I am anticipating events a little. In addition to the production of Werner and The Amber Heart, the spring and summer season of 1887 saw revivals, in addition to Faust, of various pieces which had become established favourites at the Lyceum. The Bells and Jingle were given on April 23, The Merchant of Venice was played on May 16, Louis XI. on the 28th of that month, Much Ado About Nothing on June 13, and Olivia on June 29. In the autumn of this year, Henry Irving and Miss Terry played for a few weeks in the provinces. On November 7, they began, at the Star Theatre, New York, their third tour of America, the great attraction of the *répertoire* being Faust. The tour terminated in New York on March 24.

During their absence the theatre was again occupied by Miss Mary Anderson, who commenced her third season at the Lyceum on September 10, 1887, with The Winter's Tale. The revival was a great success, the run not

terminating until March 24, 1888, when the hundred and sixty-sixth performance—a record in the history of the play—was given. Miss Anderson doubled the parts of



Miss Mary Anderson as Hermione.

Hermione and Perdita, her queenly dignity in the former character being an admirable contrast to her girlish simplicity in the latter. Mr. William Winter, who rightly found in Miss Anderson's rendering of Hermione one of the noblest impersonations of the stage, described her

treatment of the two parts in an admirable essay, from which I can only make a brief extract :—

“It is one thing to say that Mary Anderson was better in Perdita than in Hermione, and another thing to say that the performance of Perdita was preferred. Everybody preferred it, even those who knew that it was not the better of the two ; for everybody loves the sunshine more than the shade. Hermione means grief and endurance. Perdita means beautiful youth and happy love. It does not take long for an observer to choose between them. Suffering is not companionable. By her impersonation of Hermione the actress revealed her knowledge of the stern truth of life, its trials, its calamities, and the possible heroism of character under its sorrowful discipline. Into that identity she passed by the force of her imagination. The embodiment was majestic, tender, pitiable, transcendent, but its colour was the sombre colour of pensive melancholy and sad experience. That performance was the higher and more significant of the two. But the higher form of art is not always the most alluring, never the most alluring when youthful beauty smiles, and rosy pleasure beckons another way. All hearts respond to happiness. By her presentment of Perdita the actress became the glittering image and incarnation of glorious youthful womanhood and fascinating joy. No exercise of the imagination was needful to her in that. There was an instantaneous correspondence between the part and the player. The embodiment was as natural as a sunbeam. Shakespeare has left no doubt about his meaning in Perdita. The speeches of all around her continually depict her fresh and piquant loveliness, her innate superiority, her superlative charm ; while her behaviour and language as constantly show forth her nobility of soul. One of the subtlest lights thrown upon the character is in the description of the manner in which Perdita heard the story of her mother’s death—when ‘Attentiveness wounded’ her ‘till from one sign of dolour to another, she did bleed tears.’ And of the fibre of her nature there is, perhaps, no finer indication than may be felt in her comment on old Camillo’s worldly view of prosperity as a vital essential to her permanence of love :—

‘I think affliction may subdue the cheek,
But not take in the mind.’

“In the thirty-seven plays of Shakespeare there is no strain of the poetry of sentiment and grace essentially sweeter than that which he

has put into the mouth of Perdita; and poetry could not be more sweetly spoken than it was by Mary Anderson in that delicious scene of the distribution of the flowers. The actress evinced comprehension of the character in every fibre of its being, and she embodied it with the affluent vitality of splendid health and buoyant temperament—presenting a creature radiant with goodness and happiness, exquisite in natural refinement, piquant with archness, soft, innocent, and tender in confiding artlessness, and, while gleeful and triumphant in beautiful youth, gently touched with an intuitive pitying sense of the thorny aspects of this troubled world. The giving of the flowers completely bewitched her auditors. The startled yet proud endurance of the King's anger was in an equal degree captivating. Seldom has the stage displayed that rarest of all combinations, the passionate heart of a woman with the lovely simplicity of a child. Nothing could be more beautiful than she was to the eyes that followed her lithe figure through the merry mazes of her rustic dance—an achievement sharply in contrast with her usually statuesque manner. It 'makes old hearts fresh' to see a spectacle of grace and joy, and that spectacle they saw then and will not forget. The value of those impersonations of Hermione and Perdita, viewing them as embodied interpretations of poetry was great, but they possessed a greater value and a higher significance as denotements of the guiding light, the cheering strength, the elevating loveliness of a noble human soul."



Miss Mary Anderson as Perdita.

Mr. Forbes Robertson was the Leontes of this revival, others in the cast being the late F. H. Macklin as Polixenes, Mr. Fuller Mellish as Florizel, Mr. Charles Collette as Autolycus, Mr. Arthur Lewis as Cleomenes, Miss Zeffie Tilbury as Mopsa, and the late Sophie Eyre as Paulina.

This was not only Miss Anderson's last season at the Lyceum, but her last in London. She retired from public life in the following year.

Miss Geneviève Ward then returned to the Lyceum for a few nights, producing *Forget-Me-Not* on April 2, with Mr. W. H. Vernon as Sir Horace Welby, and Mr. C. W. Somerset, Mrs. Canninge, and Miss Dorothy Dene in the cast. Miss Ward also played a part which, in more recent years, has won Miss Ellen Terry hosts of admirers—Nance Oldfield, in Charles Reade's one-act comedy of that name. On April 7, Miss Ward produced at the Lyceum, for the first time, a new drama in four acts, by Mr. T. Edgar Pemberton and Mr. W. H. Vernon, entitled *The Loadstone*.

CHAPTER XIV

1888-1894

Faust again revived—Madame Bernhardt, and Mr. Richard Mansfield, at the Lyceum—Macbeth revived—Miss Ellen Terry as Lady Macbeth—Henry Irving as Macbeth—One hundred and fifty-one performances of the tragedy—The Dead Heart—Verdi's Otello produced at the Lyceum—Madame Bernhardt as Lena Despard — The Daly Company — Ravenswood — Revival of Henry VIII.—Its long run—Revival of King Lear—Production of Becket—Tennyson's drama acted before Queen Victoria—Cinderella—Faust revived once more—Five hundred performances at the Lyceum—The Queen of Brilliants—Santa Claus.

FOLLOWING the American tour and the departure from the Lyceum of Miss Mary Anderson and Miss Geneviève Ward, Faust was revived, on April 14, 1888, this being the 508th representation of the play. Then came, on May 23, as already noted, Robert Macaire and The Amber Heart. The theatre was occupied in July by Madame Bernhardt in La Tosca, La Dame aux Camélias, Fédora, and, on July 23, for the first time in London, in Françillon. On August 4, Mr. Richard Mansfield appeared at the Lyceum as Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, in the "sole authorised version" of that gruesome story and "by kind permission of Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson." Mr. Mansfield, who was supported by an American company, played

Jekyll and Hyde and A Parisian Romance—Octave Feuillet's play—until the middle of October. On the 19th of the latter month, he took the title-rôle in Prince Karl, a four-act comedy by Archibald C. Gunter. He performed this part until the termination of his season in December. It was still the custom to have a short play in addition to the principal piece of the evening. Thus, on September 17, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde was preceded by Lesbia, a classical comedy in one act, by Mr. Richard Davey. Later on, Horace Wigan's comedietta, Always Intended, was acted.

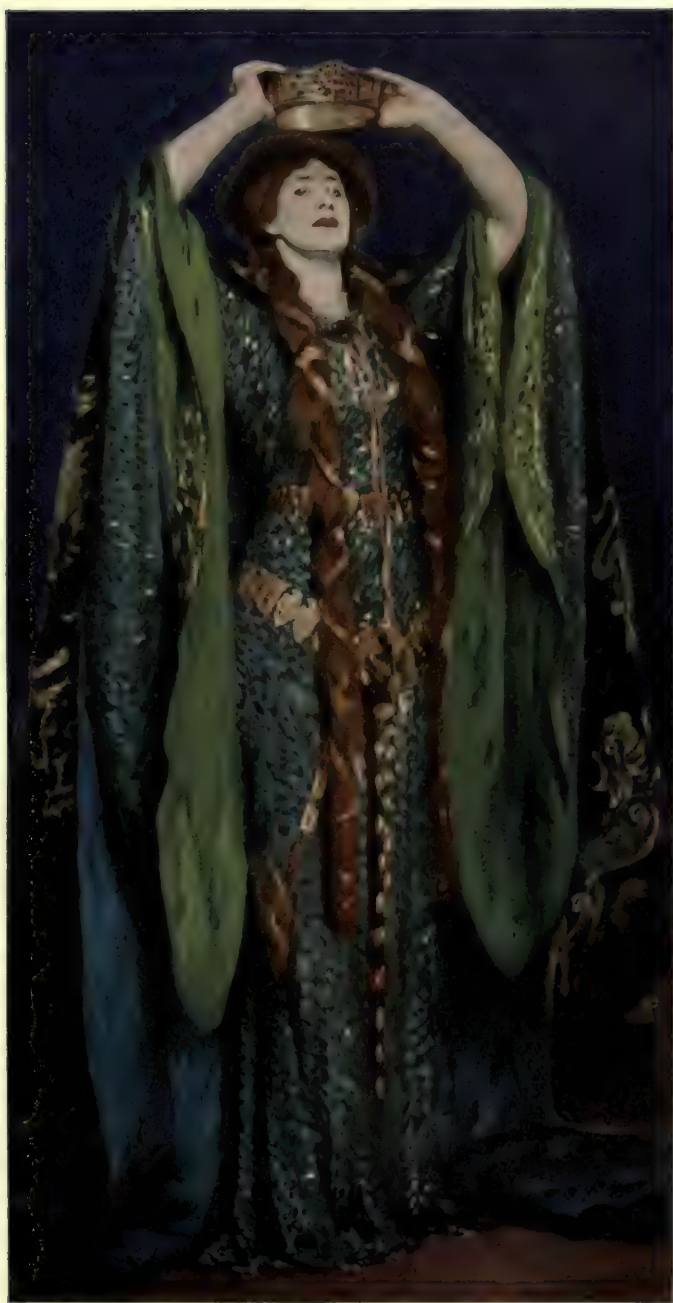
After the departure of Mr. Mansfield, Henry Irving and Miss Terry—who had been on tour in the provinces—returned to the Lyceum, on December 29. Macbeth was staged with the poetic feeling which is characteristic of all the productions of Shakespeare by Irving. It was found that the Macbeth of Henry Irving in 1888 was "much stronger physically as well as mentally, than it was in 1875." The conception of the character was not altered, but it was considerably intensified. The revival possessed unusual novelty in the Lady Macbeth of Miss Terry, whose undertaking of the character had aroused much preliminary discussion. The *Daily Chronicle* published a masterly criticism on the performance in which it said of the Lady Macbeth of the hour: "Love blinds her to all else but the fulfilment of her wishes, and thus she allies herself to the spirits of evil 'to prick the sides' of his intent and help him to happiness. This the Lady Macbeth of Miss Ellen Terry, whose impersonation, both in imagination and in execution, is in such sympathy with the Macbeth of Mr. Irving that the two performances are inseparable. Without such an affectionate, determined

woman as Miss Terry makes Lady Macbeth, the newly-invented Thane of Cawdor, as illustrated by Mr. Irving, would never have laid violent hands on Duncan. After being the confidant, she becomes the guide and urges him forward to ruin whilst she believes it will bring him peace." In the first act, continued the article, "Mr. Irving indicated with many felicitous touches the brooding manner of the Thane and the power exercised over him by the unselfish affection—almost amounting to adoration—of his wife (exhibited by her steadfast gaze upon the portrait of her absent spouse carried in her bosom, after she has read the letter narrating Macbeth's interview with the witches), whilst Miss Ellen Terry has rarely acted with such intensity. . . . The masterful spirit of Miss Ellen Terry's Lady Macbeth when employed upon her husband's advancement is still more noticeable in the second act. With her homely dress of sober hue, and with bright auburn tresses that are sometimes allowed to fall in two long plaits almost to her feet, the Lady Macbeth of Miss Terry has no outward resemblance to any other character she has played. The voice is the same, her movements are as eloquent as the words she has to speak, but all else is different. The new Lady Macbeth feels that her husband may fail at the very last, so she nerves herself to give him renewed courage. She is no longer passive, but active in the plot. He shall attain his object, or they will perish together. The hour for the success of their scheme is now, or not at all. They have waited for it, and if they allow it to pass a similar opportunity may never return. She does not think that anything more than the removal of Duncan is necessary to secure her husband's triumph. Only when the deed is done and the guilty pair stand

together alarmed by the knocking at the gate, does Lady Macbeth resign the control of affairs. The weakness of her sex asserts itself when, agitated by the knowledge of the manner in which the murder has been committed, and in a measure terrified by the vehement grief and indignation of the suddenly-aroused inmates of the castle, she faints and is borne away. Excellent as it all is—provided we accept Miss Ellen Terry's reading of the character as the correct one—the chief triumph of the actress is, however, obtained in the somewhat subordinate scene between the husband and the wife, now respectively king and queen—feared by all, and loved by none—when they discover the sacrifice they have made to obtain power. With as much beauty of tone and of feeling as she speaks Ophelia's simile 'Sweet bells jangled; out of tune and harsh,' does Miss Terry deliver that most pathetic of laments:—

'Nought 's had, all 's spent,
Where our desire is got without content :
'Tis safer to be that which we destroy,
Than, by destruction, dwell in doubtful joy.'

These lines have a wealth of meaning as the confession of an overcharged soul; as uttered on Saturday night, their poetical charm received the most exquisite interpretation. . . . The novelty, like the grace and power of the new Lady Macbeth, lies in the joy she feels in her husband's presence, in the delight with which she hears him praised, and in her readiness to subordinate everything to his ambition. These and kindred emotions are portrayed in the most effective manner, and create a great impression even upon those who are by no means prepared to accept Macbeth's wife as a gentle, affectionate, and altogether fascinating, albeit resolute, lady."



From the Painting by J. S. Sargent, R.A.

Hentschel-Colourtype.

MISS ELLEN TERRY AS LADY MACBETH.

No critic has written more powerfully in favour of the acting of Henry Irving, or with a clearer perception of his art, than Sir Edward R. Russell, editor, and part proprietor of, the *Liverpool Daily Post*, whose essay, Irving as Hamlet, is treasured by all students of the English stage. He contributed to the *Fortnightly Review* an article on Irving as Macbeth from which I take the following passages:—

“Following from scene to scene, and from speech to speech, the wickedness of Macbeth, as his wife sustains his spirits for the fulfilment of the guilt which is his chosen rôle, it seems incredible—now that Irving has given us the cue for truer thought on the subject—that it should be levelled at any actor as a reproach that he makes Macbeth craven and abject. What is the man else? What greatness has he except in the field, in vivid eloquence, and in a desperate death at bay? It is no weakness to shrink from crime. To recoil from a misdeed which promises wealth or power is to many a nature a task requiring vast strength of moral principle. No one would call Macbeth a coward for being horrified at the thought of murder. But Macbeth was meanly wicked, because his mind did not revolt from the deed but only from its accompaniments and consequences.

“When Irving, as Macbeth, goes off with his wife, saying, in a half-vacant, half-desperate manner, that the false face must hide what the false heart doth know, the spectator feels as he looks at him that his face will never be false enough to hide his trouble, and that Lady Macbeth will have the intolerable responsibility of keeping up a curtain of fair show before the horrible realities which will presently and for long years be the basis of their greatness. And this is only one of many thoughtful points. With this reflective actor it is often in another scene than that in which they occur that the words of any particular passage receive their finest illustration. Sometimes there is great strength in his abstention from usual effects. For instance, previous Macbeths have made a great point by a complete change of manner, at the words when Banquo’s ghost vanishes,

“ ‘Why so,
Being gone, I am a man again.’

Mr. Irving, on the other hand, delivers these words in the anxious tone of a man who ought to feel relieved, but in reality does not. This is

much truer. It may probably be taken as a rule that sudden absolute changes of manner, which leave no trace of the previous tone of feeling, are unnatural and melodramatic, except where there is an entire change of material circumstances ; and even they are not always true to life. So here is one among many instances of this actor being less instead of more melodramatic than others. But there is equal power in his enactments of each scene as it passes. In the dagger scene we perceive the profound meaning which, in a man of Macbeth's mould, lay in his previous undertaking to 'bend up each corporal agent to his terrible feat.' According to the notions which seem to prevail among a majority of critics, any such effort should be unnecessary. If he were going to battle, and were in danger of immediate death, his corporal energies would need no bracing ; why should noble Macbeth become physically unstrung at the task of killing a weak old man in his sleep ? Shakespeare knew better, and Irving, as was said of him in Hamlet, 'will not go out of the character.' As he enters alone, and begins to follow the dagger in the air, which—significant phrase—marshals him the way *that he was going*, his gait is that of a sick man roused from his couch and feebly staggering to his feet amidst the swaying of an earthquake. As at length he creepingly approaches the door of the king's chamber, at the words, 'Thou sure and firm set earth,' his feet, as it were, feel for the ground, as if he were walking with difficulty a step at a time on a reeling deck. When he returns after committing the murder, we see at once, if we are calm enough, what Irving has added to the achievements of his greatest predecessors in this scene. Hazlitt, whose comments on Macbeth are not altogether worthy of him, said of Edmund Kean, that he left it in doubt whether he was a king committing a murder, or a man committing a murder to be king, but that as a lesson in common humanity his acting was heart-rending. 'The hesitation,' says Hazlitt, 'the bewildered look, the manner in which his voice clung to his throat and choked his utterance, his agony and tears, the force of nature overcome by passion, beggared description.' This must have sufficiently surprised the Kemble school. Irving has partly added, partly substituted, an idea of tremendous physical prostration, essential to the character of one whose bravery all leaves him when he is wickedly engaged. He reels, he totters, he can barely support himself. One fears that he will smear his wife's arms, or stain his clothes, with the bloody daggers, as he holds them in a sort of paralytic clutch, with all intelligent grip and management gone out of his fingers. His very articulation is as if his teeth were loosened and his tongue swollen. He flounders and faints in forlorn

wretchedness and horror. His body sways as if already hanging on a gibbet. He is slowly dragged off the stage, moaning, more dead than alive.

"To understand this is not enough to feel the situation. We must know the true Macbeth. We must see, as his wife has seen from the first, that he is capable of suggesting and devising crime but not of insensibility in committing it. The true Macbeth, as portrayed by our latest great actor, is neither a generous hero nor yet an insensate criminal. He is a man who, though not devoid of moral feeling, is without operative conscience—a man who, innocent of cruel tastes or malignant resolve to be a villain, is always, and knows he is always, open to the suggestions and invitations of his besetting passion, a man ever ready to meet such cues to wickedness half-way and not capable, even when racked by fear and misery, of entertaining the idea that moral considerations are to veto any act which he considers for his interest."

Macbeth was so successful that it ran until June 29, 1889, when the tragedy was given for the one hundred and fifty-first time. The autumn season of this year was notable for the revival, on September 28, of *The Dead Heart*. The original production of the play, at the Adelphi Theatre, on November 10, 1859, included Benjamin Webster as Robert Landry, David Fisher as the Abbé Latour, and Miss Woolgar as Catherine Duval, characters taken at the Lyceum by Henry Irving, Mr. S. B. Bancroft—as he then was—and Miss Ellen Terry. In the Adelphi cast were also two actors who are well known to the modern playgoer—John L. Toole and John Billington. The old drama by Watts Phillips was rewritten for the Lyceum by Mr. Walter Herries Pollock; and particular care was paid to the Revolutionary music and to the costumes. "The æsthetic and romantic Miss Ellen Terry, accustomed to clinging robes and suggested mediævalism, must," said the *Daily Telegraph*, "dance in the flounced muslin and rose-covered short skirts of 1771, and then like

a faint replica of the white-haired, saddened Marie Antoinette, weep for her idolised son ; Mr. Henry Irving must for the nonce assume the saffron suit of the early Republican dandy, the becoming long surtout of Danton and Robespierre, and know exactly at what moment to put round his waist the tri-colour sash." Of the acting, the same journal said : " Mr. Irving has already had two fine opportunities, both greedily seized—the one when the distraught and half-witted imbecile is rescued from prison and breaks through the mist of terror to the day-dawn of reason ; the other when Landry, accosted by his idolised Catherine, stands motionless, statue-like, and nerveless in her presence. No touch of hers can heighten his pulse, no prayers of hers can touch his heart ; no smile from that once-idolised face can bring one response into the saddened and impassive countenance. The man is there ; but his heart is dead. Mr. Irving, with singular skill, has touched the key-note of the story. He is interesting, absorbing, as he ever is. . . . Then comes the sacrifice, the beautiful devotion of Sydney Carton, the sublime self-sacrifice of Hugh Trevor in *All for Her*, the true and only ending to this tale of woe. When the numbers are called, the faithful Robert Landry, who has nothing left to live for, takes the young boy's place, and sees mother and son united in a wild, passionate embrace, and Robert Landry, mounted on the scaffold and under the knife of the guillotine, smiles sadly on the idol of his life as the curtain falls. There is but little tender or womanly interest in this sad story. Still it fell happily to Miss Ellen Terry to awaken it in tearful accents and melting moments ere the curtain fell. The scene at the base of the scaffold in the cold morning light was beautifully played by Miss Terry and moved the



Henry Irving in several of his Principal Characters.

audience to genuine emotion. Of action and excitement, there had been plenty ; here was the pathos, true, direct, and unaffected." The *Dead Heart* ran through the greater part of the season, one hundred and eighty-three performances being given. One of the features of the representation was the admirable acting of Mr. Bancroft as the Abbé Latour. Mr. Gordon Craig made his first appearance on the stage as the young Arthur de St. Valery. In May, *Louis XI.*, *The Bells*, and *Olivia* were revived.

Two seasons of exceptional interest should be chronicled before we proceed with the regular Lyceum productions. Italian opera, as previously set down, was no stranger to the Lyceum, but it will be news to many people that the first performance in London of Verdi's *Otello* took place here.—The date was July 5, 1889, the representation being under the direction of the well-known impresario, Mr. M. L. Mayer. Signor Tamagno and Signor Maurel appeared as *Otello* and *Iago* respectively, this being the first appearance in England of the former singer. Signor Faccio was the conductor, and the orchestra consisted of eighty-one picked musicians, the leading players of Italy. On July 9, Madame Bernhardt, supported by M. J. Damala, M. Pierre Berton, Madame Jane Mea, and others, was seen in a version of Mr. F. C. Phillips' novel, *As In a Looking Glass*, called *Lena*. Madame Bernhardt played here until August 3, representing, in addition to *Lena*, *La Tosca*, *La Dame aux Camélias*, *Phèdre*, *Frou-Frou*, *Adrienne Lecouvreur*, *Fédora*, and *Theodora*. The great French actress appeared on alternate nights during the *Otello* season. Some twenty odd performances of Verdi's opera were given. In the summer of 1890—beginning on June 10—Mr. Augustin Daly's company of comedians played for ten weeks at

the Lyceum, producing several of their stock pieces, including *Casting the Boomerang* and *Nancy and Co.* They also gave *As You Like It* and *The Taming of the Shrew.*

Henry Irving's next production was *Ravenswood*, acted for the first time on September 20, 1890. This was a play in four acts, founded by Herman Merivale on *The Bride of Lammermoor.* There had, of course, been many other stage versions of Walter Scott's well-known story, but it was freely recognised that the Lyceum play was, not only the most dramatic, but the best written and the most poetical of them all. As *Edgar of Ravenswood*—a character which had been played by Frédéric Lemaître and Fechter—Irving had a part, in the opinion of the *Daily Telegraph*, "after his own heart—romantic, picturesque, impressive, and full of influence. His good work on this remarkable drama does not end with the moulding of it, but in the acting of the scenes that give it life, and meaning and vigour. He is the dominant figure in every one of the important scenes. We have need to do more than look at him; we are bound to be attracted by him. Always, as is right, the figure on which the eye rests with most satisfaction, from the first moment that he struck the chord of the drama that by his power was steadfastly maintained. But in one scene Mr. Irving rose to very special excellence. We never remember in a play of this kind to have seen him to such advantage as when the exiled *Ravenswood* returns to face the faithless *Bride of Lammermoor.* How difficult it is to be original at such a situation!—one of the most theatrical and conventional on record. Yet here Mr. Irving displayed his power of originality and of thinking out an old scene in a new way. We saw the man who had been ill, harassed, distracted,

well-nigh heart-broken. He did not bound on to the scene in the accepted manner. He tottered on—spent, haggard, and forlorn. On his face were the lines of a year's agony and anxiety. He did not storm or scold. He looked dazed, as if he were recovering from a blow. He was a man, a Ravenswood, not an actor. The fate that had pursued him with such relentless vengeance was combated with but one struggle more. But it was the struggle of a spent man. He had done his utmost, and the end was at hand." The part of Lucy Ashton did not give Miss Terry so much opportunity for distinction as might have been desired, but the tenderness of her acting in the love scene at the Mermaiden's Well was beautiful in the extreme. Great pains were bestowed on the production, the various scenes being exquisite. Ravenswood was followed, early in 1891, by revivals of various popular pieces. Much Ado About Nothing was played on the afternoon of February 7, The Lyons Mail being acted in the evening. On February 21, The Bells was revived, Charles the First being reproduced on March 4; and April 22 saw Olivia once more. The next play of the series was The Corsican Brothers on May 12, it being preceded by Nance Oldfield, with Miss Ellen Terry in her brilliant impersonation of the actress-heroine. This fine *répertoire* kept the theatre crowded until the last night of the season, July 25. Henry Irving, Miss Ellen Terry, and the Lyceum company then went on a tour of the provinces which lasted from the middle of September until December 12, the theatre being occupied during their absence by Mr. Daly's company.

On January 5, 1892, King Henry VIII. was presented "for the first time under Mr. Irving's management," with a magnificence which excelled anything that had

hitherto been done in the history of Shakespearean drama, even at the Lyceum. With the aid of modern effects, by



Henry Irving as Cardinal Wolsey.

a vast expenditure, and a careful study of every possible archæological authority, a combination of splendour and correctness was obtained which resulted in "the most perfect reproduction of Court life in the days of Henry VIII.

that this stage, or indeed, the stage of any country, had ever seen. It would tax the imagination," said a contemporary criticism, "to believe what can be done on the modern stage until this splendid revival has been witnessed.



Miss Ellen Terry as Queen Katharine.

There are fourteen complete scenes, elaborately set, and they change almost without descent of curtain as if by magic. The lights are turned down, there is a momentary darkness, and a gorgeously equipped scene, complete with furniture, is changed to another literally in the twinkling of an eye. . . .

At no time in the history of the stage has so superb a pageant been seen. The first splendid effect is made with the entrance of Cardinal Wolsey, then in the fulness of his power, his wealth, his dignity. The silver trumpets sound, and amidst monks, retainers, servitors, choristers, and retinue, under a gorgeous baldaquin, the haughty Cardinal appears. Never before in our memory

has Mr. Irving made so wonderful a picture. He is swathed from head to foot in what is miscalled the cardinal's scarlet. It is not scarlet at all, but an indescribable geranium-pink, with a dash of vermillion in it. The biretta on the head is of the same blush-rose colour, and it hides every inch of hair, bringing into relief the pale, refined, and highly intellectual face. . . . At

the end of the third act comes, as we all know, the only scene that can make Cardinal Wolsey an acceptable character for an actor of the first class. Hitherto, he has been mainly in the background, but now Shakespeare makes him prominent, and gives to him the celebrated farewell speeches. Mr. Henry Irving does not swerve from his original reading of Wolsey. The Queen says of him, 'He was a man of unbounded

stomach, ever ranking himself with princes.' In Mr. Irving's Wolsey we see nothing of the toady or the parvenu. Apparently, he is the most refined and delicate-minded man at Court. Consequently, and true to this conception of the character, the farewell to all his greatness is not so much the regret of a strong and ambitious man baffled, but that of a keenly sensitive



Mr. Forbes Robertson as the Duke of Buckingham.

man disappointed in his friend. The fallen idol is not hewn out of stone or granite, but is of dainty alabaster. Picturesque ever, Mr. Irving makes Wolsey's farewell one of tearful regret." The dignity, the queenliness, and the pathos of Miss Terry's portraiture of Katharine made the character a far more lovable one than it had hitherto been imagined or impersonated. The Royal air with which Mr. Terriss wore his gorgeous costumes enabled us to see the king to the very life. One of the most admirable impersonations was that of the Duke of Buckingham by Mr. Forbes Robertson. Henry VIII. ran through the spring and summer seasons. For the reopening of the theatre in the autumn, on September 24, *The Bells* was chosen. On October 1, Henry VIII. was again put in the bills and was played until November 5, the run terminating with the 203rd representation. The next revival was again devoted to Shakespeare.

The play was *King Lear*, and the date November 10. In the customary speech which was demanded at the end of the first performance the actor-manager alluded to the difficulties attendant upon such a production. "If," he said, "our humble efforts have been able to suggest to any one here assembled one of the countless beauties of this Titanic work, we have indeed been amply repaid." Not one, but many beauties were made evident in the representation of one of the most difficult plays ever written for the stage. *King Lear* can never be popular, as that word is generally understood, but, acted with a fine sense of its grandeur as it was at the Lyceum, it is bound to awaken interest and to hold the attention. The general effect of the representation was infinitely pathetic—and that is saying much for the rendering of a piece which can be



Henry Irving as King Lear.
"But goes thy heart with this?" Act I., Sc. I.

easily made ludicrous, a tragedy in which the temptation to the actor to out-Herod Herod is enormous. Henry Irving invested the character of King Lear with a dignity which never deserted him, so that his misfortunes, not his rashness, were ever uppermost in the mind of the spectator. His regal bearing was never lost. But, above all, he created a feeling of great tenderness for the character. The effect of the scene in which Lear is reconciled to Cordelia was, perhaps, his highest artistic achievement in this play. Who can forget the beauty of his action at the line, "Be your tears wet?"—his tasting of the salt tears—or the wonderful depth of sorrow shown in his exit—"Pray you now, forget and forgive. I'm old and foolish." Another performance of great beauty was the Cordelia of Miss Ellen Terry, whose insight into the character of loving womanhood was never more clearly or exquisitely shown than in this part. She was of the greatest possible help to the play not only for her own most touching impersonation, but by reason of the contrast which she created. It goes without saying that the five acts of the tragedy were staged with the accustomed thoughtfulness and appropriateness.

One of the most successful productions, judged from all points of view, of Henry Irving's career was Becket, first played on February 6, 1893, in succession to King Lear. The character of the murdered archbishop was acted perfectly. There was no room in its interpretation for criticism, carping or otherwise. By a happy coincidence, the initial representation took place on the actor-manager's birthday, for the event was crowned with complete success. Becket, as all the world knows, has been received with the greatest favour wherever it has been acted—in London, the

provinces, Canada, and the United States of America. As my words have been so amply borne out, I print the following article, written by me on the first night of Becket for the *Liverpool Daily Post*, in which paper it appeared on the following morning :—

“ ‘Many happy returns of the day.’ So sang out a cheery voice from the pit when, at the final fall of the curtain in the first production of Becket, Mr. Henry Irving stepped in front to acknowledge the hearty and lavish plaudits of a well-pleased audience. By a felicitous circumstance, Mr. Irving’s fifty-fifth birthday was crowned by one of the greatest triumphs of his professional career. The work of bringing the late Poet Laureate’s drama on the stage, Mr. Irving said, had



Miss Ellen Terry as Cordelia.

been to himself and to his comrades a labour of very great love. The labour has not been in vain, for Becket is destined to become an exceedingly bright chapter in the annals of the Lyceum Theatre. Arranged for the stage with remarkable dexterity, it goes without saying that it is magnificently mounted. And the many admirers of Miss Ellen Terry will readily understand that she enters thoroughly

into the spirit of Rosamund, and adds another lovely portrait to the many she has already given us. It was an evening of surprise. Many people expected the play to prove dull ; it turned out the very reverse. It is full of life, interest, and movement ; while Mr. Irving, having apparently quite recovered from his recent indisposition, and showing no signs whatever of the fatigue which the work of such a production must entail, has never played with more control of himself, with more distinctness, or with more skilful and commanding effect than he did to-night. His great scene was in the last act, but he caught and riveted the attention of the audience on his first appearance, and he never relaxed his grasp for a single instant. It was throughout a scene of unwonted enthusiasm. A Lyceum audience is not easily moved, but the first representation of Becket drew forth such plaudits as are seldom heard within a West-end theatre. There was not a single hitch throughout, despite the elaborate nature of the scenery, and so well had the play been rehearsed, and in such perfect order was everything, that the delighted auditors were on their way home by half-past eleven o'clock. There were calls after the prologue and after each of the four acts.

"The literary merit of the drama may be set aside in view of its dramatic aspect. Becket happily proves in representation a much better play than *Queen Mary* or *The Cup*, and incomparably better than the ill-fated *Promise of May*. The alterations from the book as published in 1884 were made by Tennyson from the practical suggestions of Mr. Irving. They chiefly consist of judicious transpositions of certain scenes, of the elimination of a character easily and advantageously dispensed with, and of much wise condensation. The play, considered without reference to Mr. Irving's firm, convincing delineation of the principal part, or the romantic acting of Miss Terry as Rosamund, or the splendour of the scenery, is neat, workmanlike, and certainly dramatic. Becket is magnificently drawn by the dramatist, nor has the fair Rosamund ever before been brought on the stage in so beautiful a guise. All the remaining characters, nearly thirty in number, are carefully and clearly drawn, and the various events are foreshadowed and set forth with propriety and fine dramatic instinct. Becket may not be a great play in the sense that the works of Shakespeare are great, but it is decidedly a good play, and quite the most theatrically effective of all Tennyson's dramas.

"So much for the play. In regard to the acting, let me say at once that to my thinking Henry Irving's portrayal of the proud prelate will rank among his finest achievements. And in Becket he is

loyally and delightfully assisted by Miss Terry, who has in Rosamund a part worthy of her histrionic gifts and her indescribable charm. Not that Cordelia was unworthy of her, but the part was not sufficiently long for the public. Rosamund, it is true, takes a secondary place to Becket, but she is, nevertheless, vital to the drama. She has an entire act to herself, and some exquisite love scenes. And herein lies one of the chief reasons of last night's success. The warm welcome which Miss Terry received on making her first rapid entrance when Rosamund flies to Becket for protection from the turbulent and debauched FitzUrse, was but the happy herald of a marked and sure triumph. Miss Terry can touch the pathetic stop at will, but smiles become her equally as well as tears. The buoyancy and brilliancy of her nature have never stood her in better stead than on the present occasion, and I can call to mind no love scene more delicately played on the stage than that between Rosamund and the King in the second act, which is entitled Rosamund's Bower, one of the most delightful scenic pictures that has come from the brush of Mr. Hawes Craven. Robbed of its historic and royal interest, denuded of its glamour, it is a simple scene. It is that of a woman who has given the first and only great love of her life, who still trusts, whose faith is as yet unbroken. It is the love born of gentleness, of admiration, of respect ; but, above and beyond all, of abiding and unbroken faith. It is naturally by far the prettiest scene in the play, but it is so true that it must appeal to every woman of feeling. Acted with all Miss Terry's charm of expression, of manner, of voice, endowed with all her personal fascination, it becomes a scene of marvellous beauty. It appeals more strongly to women than to the majority of men, and for that reason it will be an important element in the ultimate success of the play. In the last scene of the third act, where Rosamund is tracked in her secluded garden by the pitiless Queen, the womanly feeling and dignity, the simple grace, with which Miss Terry clothes the character afford an admirable contrast to the tigerish ferocity and haughty demeanour of the revengeful, relentless Eleanor. Rosamund is not so much in evidence in the fourth and concluding act, but Miss Terry contrives to impart much tenderness to the appeals to Becket for the King ; and, finally, in her prayer for Becket's safety, in the last scene of all of this eventful drama. In the long list of heroines which she has impersonated with matchless grace, Miss Terry has not given us any more touching, or beautiful, or true womanly portrait than that of Rosamund. Her personation is the

perfect embodiment of the beauty of that love which is founded on faith.

“ Mr. Irving’s Becket possesses the same magnetic influence which made his Mephistopheles so highly attractive. It is not in every part that the actor uses his personal power. When he can do so, the effect is certain. The Becket of the play is the historical Becket. Mr. Irving presents the character with a bold, unerring hand. He is not only the Becket of history and of the drama, but a striking stage figure as well. His keynote to the character is predestination—fate. Becket saw clearly enough that when he became Archbishop he would have to forfeit the friendship of the King. He more strongly than anyone else foresaw the trouble which would inevitably come with the appointment, and he more resolutely than anyone else opposed it, for to him it meant severance of the deep friendship existing between Henry II and himself. Nay, more, it meant lasting strife, and in the end, after a life of trouble and contention, a violent death. This is the only possible view of the character, and Mr. Irving gives an alluring interest to his conception. In my opinion, the finest points in Mr. Irving’s acting, apart from his supreme effort in the last scenes, is the glance which he gives in the prologue on learning the King’s desire to make Becket Archbishop of Canterbury ; the grandeur, the quiet dignity of his demeanour, in the great scene of the first act, where Becket refuses to affix his seal to the Constitutions of Clarendon ; and, again, in the third act, where Becket snatches the uplifted arm of the Queen, and so saves Rosamund’s life. The quality of resolution, ever predominant in Mr. Irving’s acting, is particularly noticeable here. But it is in the last act that Mr. Irving excels. His face is as stern as that of fate itself. It is that of a brave man who has fought to the end, who knows that his hour is come, and who does not fear to face his foe. ‘ On a Tuesday was I born, and on a Tuesday baptised, and on a Tuesday came to me the ghastly story of my martyrdom.’ It is a Tuesday, and even as he speaks his assassins enter. The fatal blow is averted but for a moment. The monks urge Becket to save himself. They cringe and crowd round him in terror ; he alone is calm and courageous. The winter gloom deepens as his life nears its end. In the vastness of the north transept of the cathedral, he is alone, but ready. He faces the avenging knights, and in a few seconds is done to death, rolling over at the foot of the pillar as Rosamund kneels by the butchered body. Throughout the final scenes Mr. Irving held the audience in the hollow of his hand, so to speak, and the tumultuous applause that followed was but a due

recognition of a splendid, vivid, enthralling piece of acting. The character of Becket is admirably limned in this play. It is further illuminated by acting which is bold, strong, brilliant. It is enhanced by Mr. Irving's personal power, which here has full sway.



Henry Irving as Becket.

"It would be ungracious to conclude this notice without brief mention of the dashing, handsome King of Mr. Terriss, who has seldom been more happily suited ; or the valuable acting of Miss Geneviève Ward as Queen Eleanor ; or the sprightly boy, Geoffrey, of Master Leo Byrne ; or the excellent Herbert of Bosham of Mr. Haviland. The vast number of the lesser parts, including Margery, who

has a welcome representative in Miss Kate Phillips, are all carefully filled. Much praise also is in store for the appropriate incidental music of Dr. Villiers Stanford; for the dresses, which have been designed by Mrs. Comyns Carr and Mr. Charles Cattermole; and for the handsome and elaborate scenery, by Messrs. Hawes Craven, J. Harker, and W. Telbin."

It should be noted, in connection with Becket, that Henry Irving has, by special request, given selections from the play in various cities, including Canterbury, where the reading took place—on May 31, 1897—in the Chapter House of the Cathedral, within a few feet of the scene of the martyrdom. Henry Irving was also appointed by the Royal Institution of Great Britain to be their representative at the National Commemoration of King Alfred the Great at Winchester, on the afternoon of September 18, 1901, the opening day of the Commemoration, on which occasion he read scenes from Becket in response to an invitation from the Mayor of Winchester and the National Committee.

Becket had scarcely been played a month at the Lyceum ere the following announcement appeared on the programme :—

HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

having Commanded a performance of Becket to be given at Windsor Castle, on Saturday, March 18, the Lyceum Theatre will be closed on that Evening.

Henry Irving and Miss Terry, it may be mentioned, had previously acted before her late Majesty. This was at a performance given at Sandringham by the Prince of Wales. The Bells and the trial scene from *The Merchant of Venice* were played on that occasion.

One hundred and twelve performances of Tennyson's drama were given during the season, the play being chosen

for representation on the last night, July 22. As was customary, other favourite plays were revived during this period. They were : *The Merchant of Venice*, *Charles the First*, *The Lyons Mail*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *King Henry VIII.*, *Olivia*, *Nance Oldfield*, and *The Bells*. Henry Irving, Miss Ellen Terry, and the Lyceum company were in America again during the season, 1893-1894, the tour being remarkable inasmuch as it began, on September 4 of the former year, at San Francisco. It ended, in New York, on March 17. The Christmas season ushered into the Lyceum one of the most delightful entertainments of its kind ever seen. This was *Cinderella*, a "fairy pantomime," written by Mr. Horace Lennard, and produced by Mr. Oscar Barrett with a refined beauty which is unusual in so-called pantomimes. The daintiness and simple charm of Miss Ellaline Terriss will be long remembered by thousands of playgoers. The production was so successful that, immediately after its run at the Lyceum, it was transferred to New York.

Faust was selected for the return of Henry Irving and Miss Terry, on April 14, 1894, to the Lyceum, the occasion being the 431st representation of the piece at this theatre. The 500th performance at the Lyceum took place on June 30. *Becket* was played several times during the season, and on the last night, July 21, *The Merchant of Venice* was acted. On September 8, Miss Lillian Russell began a season of six weeks in a comic opera entitled *The Queen of Brilliants*, the libretto of which was adapted from the German by Mr. Brandon Thomas, Mr. Edward Jakobowski being responsible for the music. Mr. Oscar Barrett's pantomime, *Santa Claus*, was the Christmas attraction, it being played at matinées only.

CHAPTER XV

1895-1903

King Arthur—Bygones, Waterloo, and Don Quixote—Henry Irving knighted—General congratulations—An address from the Comédie Française and one from over four thousand brother and sister artists—The presentation of the latter—Various revivals—Mr. Forbes Robertson and Mrs. Patrick Campbell at the Lyceum—The Charles Wyndham celebration—Revival of Cymbeline—Richard III. revived—Madame Sans-Gêne—Peter the Great—Illness of Sir Henry Irving—The Lyceum converted into a limited liability company—Robespierre—Various plays and players at the Lyceum—Sherlock Holmes—Coriolanus—Revival of Faust—The last performance at the Lyceum—End of the theatre.

THE year 1895 was a momentous one in theatrical annals inasmuch as it secured, through the actor-manager of the Lyceum, official recognition of the stage. The first event, however, which must be recorded, was the production, on January 12, of King Arthur, a play in a prologue and four acts, by Mr. J. Comyns Carr. "Mr. Irving," it was written at the time, "is to be greatly praised for producing such a drama in our prosaic days. A play like this, which is soundly constructed as a stage piece, a play which is at once human in its interest, excellent in its language, beautifully framed, and admirably acted, is calculated to do the stage immense service. King Arthur

is essentially for the public, not for a clique. That being so, it is well that it contains the elements of romance, and poetry, and heart, so sadly lacking on our stage. It teaches a lesson which all but those who are wilfully blind can—and must—see. The noble figure of the king, his great love for his queen, the shattering of his life on the discovery of his wife's unfaithfulness, and the splendid dignity of his bearing under the terrible misfortune, form a picture which will live in the memory of all who witness the play. Without heart interest, and a touch of idealism, there can be no great acting. Mr. Irving's King Arthur is both idyllic and human. His romantic and mysterious manner makes him a fitting figure for the scene in the magic mere. An ordinary actor would be out of place here, because he would be, for all his surroundings, distinctly of to-day. Mr. Irving is dreamy and sombre, but he makes you feel that out of the land of shadows something real, something nearer to ourselves, will presently arise. He fulfils this promise in the fine scene in the third act where King Arthur discovers the tragedy which engulfs Lancelot and makes Guinevere a stricken woman. Anything more intensely human cannot well be imagined. You can judge Mr. Irving's acting either in the prologue or in this later scene. Place them, though, side by side, as companion pictures, or, to be more correct, as contrasting pictures—the one of romance, above and beyond us; the other of ourselves, a human heart laid bare and broken—a combination of poetry and humanity, and there you have the reason of Mr. Irving's superb success on the stage. Mr. Forbes Robertson's Lancelot is of great value to the play. He renders to perfection the good man who, impelled by Fate to do a wrong, is haunted

by conscience and stricken with shame. Any modernising here, any attempt to toy with the part, would have been fatal to it. The character, admirably conceived by the dramatist, is interpreted with delightful fidelity by the actor. The character of Guinevere is somewhat overshadowed by those of Arthur and Lancelot. Miss Ellen Terry invests it with perfect grace and womanliness. Her finest opportunity is in the third act, where, by facial expression, by gesture, and by voice, she realises the truth which occasionally comes to the one woman who holds in her hands the lives of two men—and ruins them both. She gives us another proof of that undefinable fascination, the power of binding her hearers in a sort of spell, which she alone among English actresses exercises upon the stage. We have not seen any finer acting, anything more true to nature, than that of Mr. Irving, Mr. Forbes Robertson, and Miss Terry in this scene. Indeed, the performance generally is what might be anticipated at the Lyceum, Miss Geneviève Ward being the Morgan Le Fay, Mr. Frank Cooper the Mordred, Mr. Sydney Valentine the Merlin, and Miss Lena Ashwell—refined, tender, and pathetic in a very high degree—the Elaine.” The incidental music, it may be added, was composed by Sir Arthur Sullivan, and the scenery and costumes were designed by Sir Edward Burne-Jones. King Arthur had a prosperous career at the Lyceum and was subsequently received in America with great enthusiasm.

On May 4, the Lyceum programme was made up of three one-act pieces. The programme opened with Mr. Pinero's *Bygones*, interpreted by Mr. Ben Webster, Mr. Haviland, Mr. Sydney Valentine, Miss Ailsa Craig, and

Miss Annie Hughes. Then came a drama which is now indelibly impressed upon the memory of modern playgoers



SIR HENRY IRVING.

BORN FEBRUARY 6, 1838.

D.Litt. Dublin, 1892; Litt.D. Cambridge, 1898; LL.D. Glasgow, 1899.

KNIGHTED, 1895.

—A Story of Waterloo, by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. The little play, first produced at Bristol, on September 21 of the previous year, had already been acted in London, at

a benefit *matinée*, at the Garrick Theatre, on December 17. This was its first performance at the Lyceum. There is no need to dwell upon an impersonation which is so well-known as the Corporal Gregory Brewster of Henry Irving. But, realistic and impressive as is this highly finished study throughout, in nothing is the art of the actor so exemplified as in the actual death of the Waterloo veteran. It comes quickly, in a burst of vitality caused by the recollection of the heroic action of younger days. It is short and sharp, and over before the audience can reflect. When the curtain has fallen, it is felt that we have all along been looking unawares on a dying man. An elaborate, long-drawn-out death-scene would prove too great a tension, and Henry Irving wisely makes the end as swift as it is true. The impersonation is a perfect picture of the pathos of old age.

The third piece of this evening was entitled *A Chapter from the Life of Don Quixote*. It was a condensation of a five-act play which had been written by the late W. G. Wills. It enabled the actor to represent the immortal character from the pages of Cervantes, and to make Don Quixote, in a few brief minutes, live before us. The very figure, tall and spare, with frail, pointed beard, arched eyebrows, and dreamy, far-off expression, was notable. But Henry Irving admirably brought out the chivalry of the character, all its gentle feeling, all its honourable purpose. You laughed with, not at, him, realising that, for all the ludicrous things done by him, there lay, under the quaint exterior, a tender heart and the soul of honour.

It was while this "triple bill" was being presented at the Lyceum that the dignity of knighthood was conferred upon the actor who had done so much for the stage. The

announcement in the list of Queen Victoria's birthday honours was received with acclamation by the playgoing



"The Knight of the Stage."

public, and the manner in which the distinction was greeted by the press and by society at large proved it to be one of

the most graceful and popular acts of Lord Rosebery's administration. There were significant demonstrations at the Lyceum on the day of the announcement, the beginning of the performance being stopped for some minutes by rounds of cheers. Some sentences in *Don Quixote* were, curiously enough, applicable to the actor's new position. "Knighthood," says the hero, "sits like a halo round thy head." "But, master, you have never been knighted," says the housekeeper. Then, after the attack upon the pump, we have the dubbing of *Don Quixote* as the Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance. Each of these points was taken up by the audience in a spirit of enthusiastic good-will. On the fall of the curtain, the actor-knight made a short speech in acknowledgment of "the appreciation shown of the honour conferred, through him, upon the calling to which he had devoted his life." Congratulations poured in from all quarters, the *Comédie Française* sending an address signed by all its members: "The committee and its *sociétaires*," it said, "desire to send you their cordial good wishes, and to signify the pleasure they feel at the high distinction of which you have lately been made the recipient. We are all delighted to see a great country pay homage to a great artist, and we applaud with all our hearts the fitting and signal recompense paid to an actor who has done such powerful service and profound honour to our calling and our art. Accept, then, dear Sir Henry Irving, the expression of our deep sympathy as artistes, and the sincere devotion which we feel towards you."

Henry Irving was formally knighted by Queen Victoria, at Windsor Castle, on July 18. On the following day, on the stage of the Lyceum Theatre, he was the recipient of an address signed by more than four thousand of his

brother and sister artists. The scene in the theatre was remarkable, every seat in the house being occupied, and no player who could possibly be present being absent. The address was drawn up by Mr. Pinero, and was enclosed in a gold and crystal casket, the design of which was by Mr. Forbes Robertson. The chair was taken by Mr. Bancroft, who said :—

“I am deeply honoured, and feel the honour deeply, in being chosen to present on such an occasion this gift to our dear friend Henry Irving, for whom an admiration nearly thirty years old, and a friendship of the same age, which ripened quickly to affection, make the privilege both precious and delightful to me. Sir, in commemoration of the unique event which brings us together, we offer for your acceptance a personal roll-call of the British stage, which contains, among some thousands of autographs, the names of survivors who have done honour to our calling in the past, the names of those who are its most distinguished ornaments now, and the names of those whose destinies lie in the future—who are, in fact, the heirs and guardians of the present and the past. Without going further down the long list, I would like to tell you that you will read the names of Lady Martin who, as Helen Faucit, won her splendid reputation in the great classic drama as a youthful heroine with Macready ; of the incomparable and ever-young Mrs. Keeley ; and of that brilliant actress Lady Gregory, who, as Mrs. Stirling, appeared last upon the stage with you ; while it will interest you to see among the names of veterans the signature of, I believe, the oldest actor in the world—Mr. James Doel, whom I had the pleasure to know years ago in Plymouth. We also present to you an address which has been written by one well remembered as an actor on these boards before he grew to be a leading dramatist of the time, and the casket which contains our offering has been designed on purpose by an actor who has often served as one of your chief lieutenants, and who will honourably preserve your own traditions here while you are absent in other lands. The most august and exalted in the realm have condescended often to courtly words and gracious deeds which will always be cherished by those of us who have received them in grateful and dutiful remembrance ; but you, Sir Henry Irving, will ever be remembered as the first actor to win for the stage the dignity and the honour of State recognition. All who are here, and those we

represent—than whom none know you better, or love you more—join with me in heartfelt wishes that the autumn of your life may be long and bright, opening to a winter of peace and happiness. When those days come, may you rejoice in the recollection that you made your companions proud of you, prouder of their calling, and each man in our ranks prouder still to think and feel that, like yourself, he is an actor.”

The address was as follows :—

“We, actors and actresses, your associates in the dramatic profession in Great Britain and Ireland—the few that have fallen out of its ranks joining in this address with those who are active—desire to offer you our congratulations upon the honour of knighthood which has been conferred on you by her Majesty the Queen. This honour is at once a formal recognition of your supreme talent as an actor, a lofty tribute to your long, arduous, and distinguished labours as the manager of the Lyceum Theatre, and an authoritative sign of appreciation of the attitude adopted by you in relation to the theatre at large. But to all who are intimately connected with the stage the event has a deeper significance, for we perceive in the signal mark of favour earned by you a token that the barrier which had hitherto enclosed the stage and its followers is yielding to the forces of liberality and open mindedness. Therefore we take this to be a fitting occasion to place upon record our grateful acknowledgment of your unvarying adherence and loyalty to those who are in the widest sense, as well as to those who are in the closest sense, your comrades. We remember that, while your performances upon the stage have greatly enlarged the popularity and influence of the drama, your utterances outside the theatre have always tended to claim for our calling generally a considerable place in the estimation of thinking people ; that in the height of your own frequent triumphs your first word has been for your fellow-workers ; that you have never wearied in demanding for the earnest actor, however modest his standing, the recognition due to one who pursues an art which is as individual and complete as it is beautiful and alluring. It is certain that to-day every member of our craft is benefited and advanced by the distinction you have so justly gained ; and we believe that the debt of gratitude due to you will be acknowledged as fully by posterity as it is by ourselves, your contemporaries. For the history of the theatre will enduringly chronicle your achievements, and tradition will fondly render an account of your personal qualities ; and

so, from generation to generation, the English actor will be reminded that his position in the public regard is founded in no small degree upon the pre-eminence of your career, and upon the nobility, dignity, and sweetness of your private character."

Sir Henry Irving was received with prolonged rounds of cheering as he rose to reply. That he was deeply moved by the address and the demonstration there could be no doubt.

"My brother and sister actors," he contrived to say, "formal speech cannot adequately convey to you the pride and pleasure awakened in me by your most cordial and loving words, and so I can but trust that you will intuitively understand the depth of my gratitude. There can be no greater honour to any man than the appreciation of his efforts by his comrades and fellow workers, who are, as against all others, most fully qualified to understand his difficulties and to sympathise with his hopes and aims. In common with you all, I rejoice at the honour conferred upon our art, and hold as another bond our gratitude to our most gracious Queen, who has conferred the distinction. That the actors whose memories extend over nearly a century, and those whose endeavours will, I trust, stretch into an equal future, should have thus united in a purpose of approval of an honour to our calling, is in itself a fragment of the history of our time of which I must rejoice to have a share. Still more must I be glad that your approval has endorsed the generous words of your address. I can only say this—that I have been always proud to be an actor; but I have never been so proud as now, for to-day there is a bond between us which I feel sure will never slacken. This beautiful casket, and its more precious contents, will ever be to me a shrine of loving memories and a monument of our unity. The honour of its possession is above all worth. In the olden times our Britons showed their appreciation of a comrade by lifting him upon their shields, and I cannot but feel, and feel it with an unspeakable pride, that you, my brothers in our art, have lifted me on your shields. There is no more honour to come into the life of a man so raised. It puts upon him a new and grave responsibility, which I must accept with hope and fear—a pledge to work with more strenuous endeavour for the well-being of our calling and for the honour of our art."

Before the end of this eventful season—which terminated on July 27th with Nance Oldfield, Waterloo, and the

church scene from *Much Ado About Nothing*—there were brief revivals of *The Bells*, *Macbeth*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Lyons Mail*, *Louis XI.*, *Charles the First*, *The Corsican Brothers*, and *Faust*.

In the autumn, Mr. Forbes Robertson and Mr. Frederick Harrison entered into the temporary management of the theatre, Sir Henry Irving and Miss Terry being on tour in Canada and the United States. The opening night of the new season was September 21, 1895, *Romeo and Juliet* being revived with perfection of scenery and appointments. Mr. Forbes Robertson's *Romeo*, already familiar in London, was a refined, romantic embodiment, "touched with just a suspicion of asceticism." Mrs. Patrick Campbell as *Juliet* was at her best in the balcony scene, in which she "revealed a tenderness, a depth of feeling, and a command of rhythmical utterance that nothing could exceed. The very air seemed to throb with the passion of her words, and to become impregnated with a sense of their poetry." The late Charles Coghlan was the *Mercutio*. During the lengthy run of the tragedy, an afternoon was devoted to the celebration of Mrs. Keeley's ninetieth birthday, the performance—which took place on November 22—being under the patronage of Queen Victoria, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and the other members of the Royal family. The Christmas season, 1895-96, saw the production of Mr. Oscar Barrett's third pantomime at the Lyceum, *Robinson Crusoe*, the libretto being again the work of Mr. Horace Lennard. The pantomime was played at matinées only, until February 22. On January 15, 1896, Mr. Forbes Robertson and Miss Marion Terry played the principal parts in the first performance,

of Mr. Henry Arthur Jones's play, *Michael and His Lost Angel*, which was so unfortunate that it was withdrawn a few nights afterwards. The next new production of the Robertson-Harrison management was a romantic play, in four acts, *For the Crown*, adapted by Mr. John Davidson from M. François Coppée's drama, *Pour La Couronne*. The chief acting honours fell to Mr. Forbes Robertson and Mr. Charles Dalton. Mrs. Patrick Campbell was the heroine, *Militza*, and Mr. W. Mackintosh, Miss Winifred Emery, and others were in the cast. The play—which



Mr. Forbes Robertson and Mrs. Patrick Campbell in *Romeo and Juliet*.

was produced on February 27th—was beautifully mounted. On March 14, Captain Robert Marshall's "fantasy," *Shades of Night*, was added to the bill.

An interesting event occurred on the afternoon of May 1, when Mr. (as he then was) Charles Wyndham was given

a festival performance in recognition of his twenty years of management of the Criterion Theatre. The first part of the Celebration took place at the Lyceum, the principal part of the programme consisting of the last three acts of *The School for Scandal*, with Mr. Wyndham as Charles Surface and Mrs. Patrick Campbell as Lady Teazle. On June 3 there was brought out *Magda*, a play in four acts, "faithfully translated" from the *Heimat* of Hermann Sudermann, by Mr. Louis N. Parker. The *Magda* of Mrs. Patrick Campbell is almost as well known now as is the rendering of the character by Eleonora Duse. It provoked much discussion when she first played it. Mr. James Fernandez was the Schwartz of the English version, Mr. Forbes Robertson the Heffterdingk. *Magda* was followed, on June 20, by *The School for Scandal*, Mrs. Campbell being the Lady Teazle, Mr. Forbes Robertson the Joseph Surface, and Mr. Fred Terry the Charles Surface. Mr. William Farren once more proved himself the best Sir Peter Teazle of our time. Mr. Cyril Maude played Sir Benjamin Backbite. On the last night of the season, June 26, scenes were given from various plays which had been produced during the tenancy of Mr. Robertson and Mr. Harrison, together with the first scene of the second act of *King Henry VIII.*, in which Mr. Robertson, as the Duke of Buckingham, repeated the successful impersonation which he gave in Irving's revival of the play in 1892.

The regular management of the theatre was resumed on September 22, with a revival of *Cymbeline*, in which Miss Ellen Terry played Imogen "with a radiance and a charm, with a pathos and a grace of which she, among modern actresses, seems to possess the secret." Miss Terry dis-

tinguished herself particularly by her womanly tenderness in the scene in which Imogen reads the letter from Posthumus announcing his arrival at Milford Haven. She was most effective in the scenes before the cave.

"What could be more fascinating," it was said, "more graceful, than this dainty figure clad in boy's apparel? Note, too, the timid handling of the unaccustomed sword, the fearful glance into the depths of the unknown cave, the exquisite comedy of the entire performance at this point. Then comes the swift



Miss Ellen Terry as Imogen.

change from girlishness to womanliness, from banter to gravity, from joy to tragic horror. With the discovery of the dead body of the supposed Posthumus, everything is altered. Nor is it easy to give anything approaching an adequate impression of the frenzied agony of the situation as Imogen, on her knees, with nervous

hands outstretched to heaven, denounces the 'damn'd Pisanio.' Rarely has Miss Terry risen to so high a level of passionate despair. Yet, withal, it is the sweet constancy, the wifely devotion, the tender trust that will probably linger longest in the recollection of the spectator



Miss Geneviève Ward as Queen Margaret.
(In the revival of *Richard III.*, December, 1896.)

as the most abiding memory of this most beautiful portrait." Of Henry Irving's Iachimo, it was written: "He gives to the character a somewhat novel rendering, which seems to be based upon Iachimo's sudden conversion in the last act. It may be taken as in the nature of a compliment if we suggest that he at-

tempts to read into the character more than it actually contains. His conception is to a large extent intellectual. The portrait is of a man whose villainy is the outcome less of a tempestuous nature than of deliberate intention. Sir Henry, as is his wont, inclines towards what is subtle and analytical rather than to the obvious. Yet in a measure the play suffers in point of plausibility by the very thoughtful-

ness and the earnestness of an actor whose work has always been identified with these qualities. His performance is one of peculiar power and imaginativeness—full of masterly



Miss Ellen Terry as Madame Sans-Gêne. (Prologue.)

touches, and at times almost demoniacal in its intensity. Nor would it be easy to conceive a more striking or pathetic spectacle than that of the humbled and contrite Iachimo, a strange but sad expression of nobility upon his face, as

in the tent scene he stands abased before his victors, in presence of the injured Posthumus and Imogen. It is impossible to pass away from the figure without paying tribute to the immense talent and forcible ability of the artist who conceived it."

The next production was Richard III. I have already referred, on a previous page, to Irving's Richard, and it need only now be added that the performance of the tragedy during December took place but once—on the 19th. Soon after the night of the revival, the actor who had created such an awe-inspiring impression by his Richard met with an accident by which he sprained his knee. This unfortunate circumstance kept him out of the bill for over two months and caused the theatre to be closed for a few nights. On December 26, however, Cymbeline was restored to the programme with Miss Julia Arthur as Imogen and Mr. Cooper Cliffe as Iachimo. On January 23, Miss Ellen Terry returned to the cast, and, on the 30th of the month, Olivia was again revived at the Lyceum, Miss Terry, of course, appearing once more as the heroine. But Dr. Primrose was played by Mr. Hermann Vezin. Henry Irving made his reappearance on February 27 as Richard III., an impersonation which he repeated until April 7.

Now came, for the first time in Henry Irving's management, the English adaptation of a French play. This was the *Madame Sans-Gêne* of M. Victorien Sardou, translated by Mr. J. Comyns Carr, and brought out on April 10. Miss Ellen Terry, who followed Madame Réjane in the character of the washerwoman who becomes ennobled, made the part more refined than did the French actress, yet without losing one jot of the comedy vein. Miss

Terry's performance was, indeed, a joyous one, and if it was not coarse it was all the better, for English and American audiences, in not being so. The Napoleon of the play is a small part, but Irving made it stand out as a living portrait. His make-up was a triumph, not only in regard to facial resemblance, but in respect of stature. The piece, which was magnificently staged, became extremely popular despite certain prognostications regarding the danger of presenting a French play at the Lyceum. On June 25, there was an interesting performance of *A Story of Waterloo and The Bells*, to which the Colonial and Indian troops who were visiting London in connection with her late Majesty's Diamond Jubilee were invited. The last night—July 22—was devoted to *Waterloo and Madame*



Miss Ellen Terry in *Madame Sans-Gêne*.
(Act II.)

Sans-Gêne. In the autumn, the Lyceum was occupied with a successful production of *Hamlet*—beginning on September 11—by Mr. Forbes Robertson, who appeared as the Prince of Denmark to the Ophelia of Mrs. Patrick Campbell.

The first day of January, 1898, saw the production of a new and original play, by Mr. Laurence Irving, *Peter the Great*, a drama of much merit, especially for so young an author. Henry Irving made a picturesque figure as the turbulent emperor, and the rather strenuous scenes which

he was called upon to play created a profound effect. The piece, which was in five acts, presented some striking views of Russian scenery. The next new work given at the Lyceum was a "a new and original melodramatic comedy," in five acts, by the late H. D. Traill and Mr. Robert Hichens, called *The Medicine Man*. The authors, experienced and of note in other branches of writing, did not succeed in showing special ability as playwrights, nor were the characters undertaken by Henry Irving and Miss Ellen Terry of sufficient value to make the piece attractive. Various revivals were given until July 1, when the season closed with *The Merchant of Venice*. On the 4th of that month, M. Edmond Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac* was acted for the first time on the London stage, with M. Coquelin as *Cyrano*. The engagement was limited to two weeks. The autumn season saw Mr. Forbes Robertson once more at the Lyceum. He revived *Macbeth* on September 17, and, on October 29, played Maeterlinck's *Pelleas and Melisande* for the first time at this house.

During this autumn an event occurred which unhappily proved to be the beginning of the end of the Lyceum Theatre. Sir Henry Irving was taken ill, as the result of a cold which he had contracted while travelling, and for many weeks was confined to the rooms of his hotel in Glasgow. His convalescence was a matter of some months. In the meantime, the theatre passed, with a result which led to the closing of this famous house, into the hands of a limited liability company.

On April 15, 1899, Henry Irving made his re-appearance at the Lyceum, under the new conditions, as Robespierre in the play of that name which had been specially written for him by M. Sardou, and translated by his son, Laurence, the

author of *Peter the Great*. The drama presented many vivid scenes, and gave an opportunity for bringing home to English minds the terrors of the period with which it dealt. M. Sardou contrived to invest the drama with a domestic interest, thereby providing Henry Irving with a fine opportunity for pathos. His acting in the sitting-room in Duplay's house, where Robespierre discovers that he has condemned his own son to the guillotine, will be recalled as the most pathetic moment in the play. Another scene—in the hall of the Conciergerie, where Robespierre sees the ghosts of his murdered victims—gave the actor scope for that display of weirdness of which he is so complete a master. The last scene—the hall of the convention—will be long remembered for its splendid handling of a stage-crowd. Miss Ellen Terry had a comparatively small part as Clarisse de Maluçon, but she was seen, before the close of the season, in several of her more popular impersonations. *Olivia*, *Waterloo* and *The Bells*, *Nance Oldfield* and *The Lyons Mail*, and *The Merchant of Venice* were revived in July, the theatre being closed after the 28th of that month. Long tours in the United States and the provinces were then undertaken by Henry Irving and Miss Terry.

Under the new state of affairs, the Lyceum was now open for nine months in the year to almost any one who elected to hire it. Thus, early in 1899, we find it occupied by the Carl Rosa English opera company, and, on February 16, by Mr. Martin Harvey who produced, on that date, *The Only Way*, an adaptation by Mr. Freeman Wills of *A Tale of Two Cities*, this being the second version of Dickens's story given at the Lyceum. Mr. Harvey, who for many years had been a member of Henry Irving's company, distinguished himself by his fine performance of

Sydney Carton. On May 2, there was a testimonial programme for the well-known actress, Miss Lydia Thompson, the use of the theatre, of course, being given on this occasion. On September 22 of this year—1899—Mr. Wilson Barrett entered into possession of the Lyceum with a revival of *The Silver King*. This splendid example of melodrama ran until the second week in October. On the second of that month, *Man and his Makers*, a drama written by Mr. Barrett in conjunction with Mr. Louis N. Parker, was acted for the first time. The following revivals were also given during the season: *The Sign of the Cross*, on October 19; *The Manxman*, on November 25; *Othello*, on December 2; and *Hamlet* on December 9. Mr. Barrett's tenancy terminated on December 16. On the 21st, there was acted a Christmas entertainment entitled *The Snow Man*, adapted from the French, in which Mr. James Welch and Miss Marie Elba took the chief parts.

The latter production was followed by Mr. F. R. Benson and his company which included Mr. Oscar Asche, Miss Lily Brayton, and Miss Lilian Braithwaite—players who were afterwards to distinguish themselves, under other managements, in London. Mr. Benson and his admirable company appeared in a remarkable round of plays. *Henry V.* was acted on February 15. Then came: *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, on February 22; *Hamlet*, on March 1; *The Rivals*, on March 8; *Richard II.*, on March 15; *Twelfth Night*, on March 22; *Antony and Cleopatra*, on March 29; and *The Tempest*, on April 5. The original season of two months was extended to eleven weeks, the *Tempest* and *Richard II.* being repeated. The best of the individual performances of the more prominent parts

were the Richard of Mr. Benson, the Miranda of Mrs. Benson, and the Pistol of Mr. Oscar Asche. Hamlet, it may be added, was produced in its entirety, two perform-



Mr. F. R. Benson as Richard II.

ances being necessary for this purpose, one beginning at 3-30 p.m. and lasting for three hours, the other occupying the three hours, 8 to 11 p.m.

Madame Duse appeared at the Lyceum in May, opening

on the 10th in Magda, acting The Second Mrs. Tanqueray on the 12th, and La Gioconda on the 14th. On October 6, For Auld Lang Syne, a four-act melodrama by Mr. Seymour Hicks and Mr. F. G. Latham, was brought out. It was followed, on November 3, by a revival of The Three

Musketeers.

Then, on December 22, Henry V. was produced on an elaborate scale by Mr. Lewis Waller and Mr. William Molli-son, the former making an heroic figure as the King, and the latter acting Pistol with capital effect. Miss Lily Hanbury de-claimed the lines of Chorus in superb style, and Miss Sarah Brooke was the Katharine. The



Mr. Lewis Waller as Henry V.

revival met with great success. Sixty-nine performances were given at the Lyceum.

Henry Irving and Miss Terry returned to their old home on April 15, 1901, when the long-promised revival of Coriolanus took place. Concerning this—the last of

the Shakespearean productions at the Lyceum—the *Times* wrote as follows :—

“ The Coriolanus of Irving is to the Coriolanus of his predecessors as the classicism of the Davids in the Louvre is to the classicism of the Alma-Tademas at Burlington House. Indeed, it is in a Rome pictured by Alma-Tadema that the new Coriolanus converses with Menenius Agrippa and turns with scorn upon the populace and receives the congratulations of Volumnia upon his return from victory over the Volscians. Menenius is Mr. J. H. Barnes, who, it may be said at once, gives an admirable study of the genial, smooth-tongued old man, so skilfully designed by the dramatist as a foil to the fiery, uncompromising Coriolanus. The audience notes the evident enjoyment with which the old fellow—who ‘s’écoute parler’—tells the crowd his story of the Belly and the Members. And what a crowd it is ! As everyone knows, the crowd is a protagonist in this play, and everything depends upon the power of the stage-management to give it life, individuality, diversity. That power is certainly not lacking at the Lyceum.



Miss Ellen Terry as Volumnia.

Whether the crowd is hooting or acclaiming Coriolanus, listening open-mouthed to its Tribunes, or arguing fatuously with itself, we are made to feel that it is a genuine mob, and no mere pack of ‘super-numeraries.’ As for Volumnia (Miss Ellen Terry), we have seen her in her first scene as the ‘Roman matron at home,’ glorying in her son’s prowess, chiding Coriolanus’s wife, Virgilia (Miss Mabel Hackney), for her fears, chatting with that inveterate gossip, Valeria (Miss Maud Milton), and doing it all with an impulsive naturalness which we do not suppose to be in any respect after the awe-inspiring fashion of

Sarah Siddons. For the Siddons tradition, like that of her brother, is a thing of the past. Everyone remembers the anecdote about that extraordinary 'business' of Mrs. Siddons, when Volumnia joined in her son's triumphal procession, 'rolling' from side to side, drunk with joy. There is no such incident to be seen at the Lyceum. Indeed, the glories of the procession are here somewhat abbreviated in order not to delay the scene at the Capitol, one of the very finest pictures in the play, with its tier after tier of white-robed senators seated in concentric semi-circles round the altar. It is a thrilling moment when they rise to their feet as one man to proclaim their new Consul, and with their shout, 'To Coriolanus come all joy and honour!' the curtain descends on the first act.

"In the next act there are two memorable things. One is the chafing of Coriolanus under his mother's entreaties to him to temporise with the mob. Sir Henry Irving's exit upon the line, 'Well, mildly be it then—mildly!' is the concentration of humorous contempt. The other is, of course, the moment of his banishment, culminating in the famous 'I banish you.'

"It is in the third act, after the visit to Aufidius's house, and the march on Rome at the head of the Volscians, that there comes the best scene in the play—the scene in which, to his own destruction, Coriolanus consents to spare Rome at the prayer of his mother and wife and child. Here Miss Terry rises to the height of the situation. She bends with a stately movement—

' My mother bows ;
As if Olympus to a molehill should
In supplication nod '—

and then turns upon her son with the rage of a she-wolf. We do not think the actress has ever compassed anything more impressive than her performance in this scene, which, with its train of black-robed matrons and maidens slowly winding through the Volscian camp, is perhaps the most picturesque incident in the whole play. Then after the brief outburst of Coriolanus against the conspirators—

' Like an eagle in a dovecote, I
Flutter'd your Volscians in Corioli ;
Alone I did it '—

comes his death, and the solemn procession following the hero's body brings the tragedy to a noble close.

"It has occasionally been said that 'Coriolanus' is an uninteresting play ; but the Lyceum performance makes this statement look

pitiably foolish. It is a performance brimming with life, rapid in movement from first to last. And amid all the swaying to and fro of the mob, and pageantry of Forum and Capitol, the clash of arms, the Coriolanus makes a splendid central figure—a rugged soldier, all compact of heroic stuff, hating praise, despising weakness, towering by sheer force and inflexibility of character above his fellows.

“Of the technical merits of the special music composed for the occasion by Sir Alexander Mackenzie we cannot here speak, save to say that it worthily completes a representation of ‘Coriolanus’ as good as this generation is likely to enjoy. If only Hazlitt could have seen it, and recorded his impressions of it for us!”

Following the necessarily limited run of Coriolanus there were brief revivals of Robespierre, Madame Sans-Gêne, Waterloo and The Bells, The Lyons Mail, Louis XI., The Merchant of Venice, and Charles the First. Coriolanus was again acted for the final performance, on July 20, of the season.

On September 2, there was produced at Liverpool a drama, in four acts, by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Mr. William Gillette, this being the initial representation in this country of the authorised version of the famous series of stories, by the first-named writer, founded on the adventures of Sherlock Holmes. Exactly a week later, the celebrated detective made his first appearance in London in the interesting person of Mr. Gillette. “It is not necessary,” I wrote at the time, in the *Sphere*, “to enter into the details of the story, which is here simply the scenic background for an admirably-drawn character and an impersonation which not only thrills but sets the mental faculties to work. If you were to analyse the part in cold blood you might say that such a marvel of perception, such a wonder of insight, such a level-headed being as Sherlock Holmes never existed. But although this may be true of certain of the details, of the incidents, of the clothing, so to speak, it

does not apply to the character as a whole. Hence the success of Mr. Gillette in the part. His Sherlock Holmes is something more than a mere automaton, a stage figure. Darkened stages, unexpected events, unmatchable *sang-froid*, are all very well, but they go for nothing unless you have human nature underlying them. The drama in question, as an excellently-contrived piece of stage-work, is capital in many respects, but it would be worth nothing unless it were interpreted with intelligence and marked individuality, and with the suggestion of deep feeling in the principal character. Sherlock Holmes, the noted detective, is the be all and end all of the drama." A hit was made by Mr. W. L. Abingdon as Professor Moriarty. Sherlock Holmes, which was given under the direction of Mr. Charles Frohman—under whose auspices Henry Irving's recent American tours have been made—was such a success that it crowded the Lyceum for one hundred and eighty-four nights.

Henry Irving returned to the theatre—for what unhappily proved to be his last season here—on May 1, when he revived *Faust* on the usual scale of completeness, and with Miss Cecilia Loftus as Margaret. So great was the popularity of the revival that it ran until June 23.

One of the most interesting and brilliant scenes ever witnessed within a theatre was that which took place on Thursday, July 3, when a reception was given by Sir Henry Irving to the representatives of the Colonies and the Indian Empire who were visiting London in connection with the Coronation of King Edward VII. The proceedings were described by the *Daily Telegraph* as beginning shortly before midnight, "visitors making their entrance from Burleigh Street either by Sir Henry Irving's own private

door or by the scene-dock, which, by some wonderful process, had been temporarily converted into a delightful vestibule. Heavy plush hangings had by similar means



Mr. William Gillette as Sherlock Holmes.

been arranged so as to conceal the walls of the stage itself, and so change, when the curtain had risen, the entire theatre into one vast reception room. Meanwhile, the orchestra had been spanned with incredible speed by two

bridges, thus connecting the stage with the auditorium, while the footlights were concealed by a glowing bank of ferns, flowers, and plants. From the front of the amphitheatre gallery hung a massive crown composed of innumerable pieces of glass, illuminated by electricity, and beneath this was a huge Union Jack designed upon a like plan. The dazzling effect of these two brilliant decorations may readily be imagined. Tables, groaning under a weight of tempting edibles, had been arranged at the extreme end of the pit, and thither visitors gravitated as occasion suggested. Sir Henry himself, standing R. U. C., to use the technical term, received his guests on the stage, and gave to each a hearty welcome to the old, historic house. Speedily the scene assumed a character of indescribable splendour, ladies in exquisite evening toilettes mingling with Indian Princes, conspicuous for their brilliant decorations ; Colonial and home officers, resplendent in sumptuous uniforms ; Colonial representatives and gentlemen in the more sombre attire of ordinary evening dress, whose names, nevertheless, are familiar to every one as those of men famous in the domains of literature, art, science, music, or the drama. Each of these departments seemed, indeed, to have sent some of its most celebrated representatives. Of the eight hundred guests invited by Sir Henry, it must suffice, however, to give merely the following short selection : Lord Grenfell, the Right Hon. Sir West and Lady Ridgeway, Sir Walter and Lady Sendall, Sir William and Lady McGregor, Sir Edmund and Lady Barton, the Right Hon. Richard and Mrs. Seddon, Sir Albert H. Hime and Miss Hime, Sir Robert Bond, his Highness the Sultan of Perak and Rajah Iskandar, the Maharaja of Gwalior, the Maharaja of Jaipur (Rajputana), the Maharaja of Kolhapur,

the Maharaja of Idar, the Maharaja of Kuch Behar, Sir Jamsetjee Jecjeebhai, the Earl of Hardwicke, Sir Arthur and Lady Godley, Sir Horace and Lady Walpole, Sir John Forrest (Minister of Defence, Commonwealth Australia) and Lady Forrest, Sir M. and Lady Ommanney, Sir Hubert and Lady Jerningham, the Hon. J. H. Choate (United States Ambassador), Mr. Henry White, Lord Justice Mathew, Sir G. Faudel-Phillips, Mr. Seymour Lucas, Dr. Robson Roose, Mr. Sydney Grundy, the Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress, Sir W. J. Soulsby, Hon. Oliver Borthwick, Professor Malcolm McHardy, Mr. Labouchere, M.P., Mr. A. W. Pinero, Mr. Henry Arthur Jones, Sir Charles Scotter, Lord George Hamilton, the Duchess of St. Albans, Mrs. Patrick Campbell, Sir Francis and Lady Jeune, Sir L. Alma-Tadema, R.A., Sir Francis Burnand, Mr. and Mrs. Tree, Lord Glenesk, Earl and Countess of Aberdeen, Sir Henry M. Stanley, Sir Douglas Straight, Sir James Blyth, and many others."

For the last weeks, other revivals were chosen. These were: Charles the First, The Merchant of Venice, Louis XI., The Lyons Mail, Waterloo, and The Bells. The final performance took place on Saturday afternoon, July 19. From the cast of The Merchant of Venice, which is given on page 340, it will be seen that Miss Ellen Terry, who had resumed her old place in the company during the previous month, then played Portia, as she had done on so many other occasions, to the Shylock of Henry Irving. After the performance, there were enthusiastic calls for the chief players. The dismal news that the theatre was about to be closed for ever had, somehow or another, got about, and several of those present felt that they were assisting at a sad function. Henry Irving made a graceful, but brief

speech, in which he thanked the spectators for their encouragement and alluded to his forthcoming production of Dante. The last words which he said to the public from the stage of the Lyceum Theatre were: "I am your ever grateful, loving servant."

The concluding scene in this history is soon told. On April 23, 1903, the Lyceum Theatre was submitted for sale by auction at the Mart, Tokenhouse Yard. The highest bid made was £244,000 at which sum the property was withdrawn, so, at least, the newspapers reported at the time, although the amount of the bid was afterwards questioned. Be this as it may, the theatre was allowed to stand absolutely idle in all respects until September 30, on which date the shareholders met, at Winchester House, for the purpose of considering a scheme for converting the celebrated play-house into a music-hall. The meeting was a stormy one and much indignation was felt, not only on the part of the shareholders, but by the play-going public, at such an ignominious suggestion. Upon a poll being demanded, the resolution was declared carried by 33 to 13. Into the details of the melancholy proceedings, it is not, happily, necessary for me to enter. But, in justice to the actor who had done so much for this particular theatre in the course of thirty years of marvellous endeavour and splendid achievement, I may quote a letter from him which was read at the meeting by his faithful colleague and friend of twenty-five years, Mr. Bram Stoker. Sir Henry Irving—who was away in Manchester at the time, fulfilling an engagement of long standing at the Theatre Royal—wrote to Mr. Stoker as follows:—

"As you will be at the Lyceum meeting to-morrow, will you please, if permissible, read this letter to the shareholders? It seems to me

that it would be a great pity to have the Lyceum diverted from its purpose as a theatre, and I have grave doubts as to the success of such a scheme. Holding the views which I do regarding the possible good influence of a theatre on the community, I could not honestly



The Lyceum in 1903.

acquiesce in such a proposal as that set forth, and under ordinary circumstances should have voted against it, being willing rather to sacrifice my own holding in the company, which is to me no inconsiderable loss. If, however, the great bulk of the shareholders are wishful to make such a change, and think it to their own interest to do

so, I am willing, in deference to their wishes, simply to abstain from any participation in the movement, and content myself with this expression of opinion. If an alternative scheme should be proposed to hold over the property (which will increase yearly in value) until a purchaser could be found, I should be prepared to pay any share or proportion—say, for two or three years—of any sum which might be required to meet the expenses of debenture interest, sinking fund, and other necessary matters.”

Continuing, Mr. Stoker remarked that Sir Henry Irving had been referred to by one of the shareholders in a manner that he considered unfair. He was sure that the gentleman had spoken in ignorance of Sir Henry's position with regard to the company, with the promotion of which he had no more to do than any other shareholder. The company approached him and asked him to sell his property, offering him terms which seemed to be fair—£39,000. This was to include his lease, which then had about twenty years to run, and for which he had been offered £10,000; and there were fittings in the theatre which were put down at a valuation of £15,000. Sir Henry had also to give for five years one-fourth of his profits made outside the theatre. In payment of the £39,000 he took £26,500 in cash and £12,500 in shares. Therefore, £26,500 was the real amount he received, for the shareholders knew what the shares were worth. During the three years in which his contract existed in vital force Sir Henry paid back to the company, from earnings on his account at the Lyceum Theatre, and absolute direct payments made from his earnings, £25,800. He (the speaker) thought that this was a very handsome return. Moreover, Sir Henry did not terminate the contract; he honourably carried it out as it stood. He simply had to leave the company because the latter were unable to fulfil their conditions of finding a theatre for him. He made arrangements for the production of one of Sardou's plays, and engaged a large company at an enormous expense, but by mutual agreement between him and the company this contract was amicably ended. Sir Henry Irving throughout had acted as an upright, honourable gentleman to the company.

Thus ends the Lyceum Theatre and this history. For, no matter what is done with the building, the play-house which has seen the long and brilliant reign of Henry Irving is, in its present state, bound to be greatly altered—transformed almost out of recognition—even if it is ever again

used as a place of entertainment, be it theatre or music-hall. For the last fifteen months it has been a melancholy sight, its exterior disfigured by the bills announcing its proposed sale by auction, its interior occupied only by Mr. Hawes Craven—who had such a large share in its scenic triumphs, and who still uses the painting-room—and faithfully guarded by the commissioner, Sergeant Barry, who has been at his post at the stage-door for over twenty-six years. Fortunately for himself, this old soldier has a fund of humour which stands him in good stead and prevents him from being depressed by his dismal surroundings. But he must have pathetic memories of the glorious nights of triumph when the theatre was in the hey-day of its success, and he must sometimes be haunted by the ghosts of the long line of players who have passed through the portals over which he still presides in a silence which is broken but seldom.



The Lyceum Horse-Shoe.

(Rescued from the ruins of the old theatre, and for many years in this corner of the hall-keeper's office.)

THE AMERICAN TOURS OF
HENRY IRVING,
MISS ELLEN TERRY, AND THE LYCEUM COMPANY:

[October 29] 1883—1884. 1884—1885.
1887—1888. 1893—1894. 1895—1896.
1899—1900. 1901—1902 [March 21].

ADDRESSES GIVEN BY HENRY IRVING DURING HIS
MANAGEMENT OF THE LYCEUM :

THE STAGE AS IT IS.

Sessional opening, Philosophical Institution, Edinburgh,
November 8, 1881.

THE ART OF ACTING.

Address to the students of the University of Harvard,
March 30, 1885.

FOUR GREAT ACTORS.

Address at the University of Oxford,
June 26, 1886.

THE ART OF ACTING.

Sessional opening, Philosophical Institution, Edinburgh,
November 9, 1891.

NEW PLAYS AND IMPORTANT REVIVALS IN WHICH HENRY IRVING AND MISS ELLEN TERRY HAVE APPEARED AT THE LYCEUM

1871—1902

✓ THE BELLS.

First acted on November 25, 1871.

Mathias	MR. HENRY IRVING
Walter	MR. FRANK HALL
Hans	MR. F. W. IRISH
Christian	MR. H. CRELLIN
Mesmerist	MR. A. TAPPING
Doctor Zimmer	MR. DYAS
Notary	MR. COLLETT
Tony	MR. FREDERICKS
Fritz	MR. FOTHERINGHAM
Judge of the Court	MR. GASTON MURRAY
Clerk of the Court	MR. BRANSCOMBE
Catherine	MISS G. PAUNCEFORT
Annette	MISS FANNY HEYWOOD
Sozel	MISS HELEN MAYNE

RAISING THE WIND.

First acted (by Henry Irving, at the Lyceum)
on March 30, 1872.

Jeremy Diddler	MR. HENRY IRVING
Fainwood	MR. E. J. ODELL
Plainway	MR. GASTON MURRAY
Sam	MR. F. W. IRISH
Miss Durable	MRS. F. B. EGAN
Peggy	MISS LAFONTAINE

CHARLES THE FIRST.

First acted on September 28, 1872.

Charles I.	MR. HENRY IRVING
Oliver Cromwell	MR. GEORGE BELMORE
Marquis of Huntley	MR. ADDISON
Lord Moray	MR. EDGAR
Ireton	MR. MARKLY
Pages	MISS E. MAYNE & J. HENRI
Princess Elizabeth	MISS HARWOOD
Prince James	MISS ALLCROFT
Prince Henry	MISS WELCH
Lady Eleanor Davys	MISS G. PAUNCEFORT
Queen Henrietta Maria	MISS ISABEL BATMAN

EUGENE ARAM.

First acted on April 19, 1873.

Eugene Aram	MR. HENRY IRVING
Parson Meadows	MR. W. H. STEPHENS
Richard Houseman	MR. E. F. EDGAR
Jowell	MR. F. W. IRISH
Joey	MISS WILLA BROWN
Ruth Meadows	MISS ISABEL BATEMAN

RICHELIEU.

Revived on September 27, 1873.

Cardinal Richelieu . . .	MR. HENRY IRVING
Louis XIII.	MR. JOHN CLAYTON
Gaston (Duke of Orleans) . . .	MR. BEAUMONT
Baradas	MR. H. FORRESTER
De Mauprat	MR. J. B. HOWARD
De Beringhen	MR. F. CHARLES
Joseph	MR. JOHN CARTER
Huguet	MR. E. F. EDGAR
François	MR. H. B. CONWAY
De Claremont	MR. A. TAPPING
Captain of the Guard	MR. HARWOOD
First Secretary . . .	MR. W. L. BRANSCOMBE
Second Secretary . . .	MR. HENRY
Third Secretary	MR. COLLETT
Marion de Lorme	MISS LE THIÈRE
Julie de Mortemar . . .	MISS ISABEL BATEMAN

PHILIP.

First acted on February 7, 1874.

Count Philip de Miraflöre . .	MR. HENRY IRVING
Count Juan de Miraflöre . .	MR. JOHN CLAYTON
Count de Flamarens	MR. H. B. CONWAY
Baron de Beauport	MR. F. CHARLES
Saint Aignan	MR. BRENNEND
Monsieur de Brimont	MR. BEAUMONT
Thibault	MR. JOHN CARTER
Count Kitchakoff	MR. HARWOOD
Count de Charente	MR. BRANSCOMBE
Marquis de Lallemont	MR. COLLETT
Monsieur Virey	MR. TAPPING
Servant	MR. A. LENEUVEN
Madame de Privoisin	MISS VIRGINIA FRANCIS
Countess de Miraflöre . . .	MISS G. PAUNCEFORT
Louise	MISS ST. ANGE
Inez	MISS J. HENRI
Marie	MISS ISABEL BATEMAN

HAMLET.

Revived on October 31, 1874.

Hamlet	MR. HENRY IRVING
Claudius	MR. THOMAS SWINBOURNE
Polonius	MR. CHIPPENDALE

Laertes	MR. E. LEATHES
Horatio	MR. G. NEVILLE
Ghost	MR. THOMAS MEAD
Osric	MR. H. B. CONWAY
Rosencrantz	MR. WEBBER
Guildestern	MR. BEAUMONT
Marcellus	MR. F. CLEMENTS
Bernardo	MR. TAPPING
Francisco	MR. HARWOOD
1st Player	MR. BEVERIDGE
2nd Player	MR. NORMAN
Priest	MR. COLLETT
Messenger	MR. BRANSCOMBE
1st Gravedigger	MR. COMPTON
2nd Gravedigger	MR. CHAPMAN
Gertrude	MISS G. PAUNCEFORT
Player Queen	MISS HAMPDEN
Opheliâ	MISS ISABEL BATEMAN

MACBETH.

Revived on September 18, 1875.

Duncan	MR. HUNTLEY
Malcolm	MR. BROOKE
Donalbain	MISS CLAIR
Macbeth	MR. HENRY IRVING
Banquo	MR. FORRESTER
Macduff	MR. SWINBOURNE
Lennox	MR. STUART
Ross	MR. G. NEVILLE
Menteith	MR. MORDAUNT
Caithness	MR. SEYMOUR
Fleance	MISS W. BROWN
Siward	MR. HENRY
Young Siward	MR. SARGENT
Seyton	MR. NORMAN
Doctor	MR. BEAUMONT
Porter	MR. COLLETT
Attendant	MR. BRANSCOMBE
Murderers	MESSRS. BUTLER & TAPPING
Apparitions	{ MISS BROWN MR. HARWOOD MISS K. BROWN
Lady Macbeth	MISS BATEMAN (MRS. CROWE)
Gentlewoman	MISS MARLBOROUGH
Hecate	MISS PAUNCEFORT
Witches	{ MR. MEAD MR. ARCHER MR. HUNTLEY

OTHELLO.

Revived on February 14, 1876.

Othello	MR. HENRY IRVING
Duke	MR. COLLETT
Brabantio	MR. MEAD
Roderigo	MR. CARTON
Gratiano	MR. HUNTLEY
Lodovico	MR. ARCHER
Cassio	MR. BROOKE
Iago	MR. FORRESTER
Montano	MR. BEAUMONT
Antonio	MR. SARGENT
Julio	MR. TAPPING
Marco	MR. HARWOOD
Paulo	MR. BUTLER
Desdemona	MISS ISABEL BATEMAN
Emilia	MISS BATEMAN (MRS. CROWE)

QUEEN MARY.

First acted on April 18, 1876.

Philip of Spain	MR. HENRY IRVING
Gardiner	MR. SWINBOURNE
Simon Renard	MR. BROOKE
Le Sieur de Noailles	MR. WALTER BENTLEY
Edward Courtenay	MR. CARTON
Lord William Howard	MR. MEAD
Sir Thomas White	MR. HUNTLEY
Count de Feria	MR. BEAUMONT
Master of Woodstock	MR. COLLETT
Lord Petre	MR. STUART
Messenger	MR. SARGENT
Steward to Princess Elizabeth	MR. NORMAN
Attendant	MR. BRANSCOMBE
Mary of England	MISS BATEMAN (MRS. CROWE)
Princess Elizabeth	MISS VIRGINIA FRANCIS
Lady Clarence	MISS PAUNCEFORT
Lady Magdalen Dacre	MISS CLAIRE
Joan	MRS. HUNTLEY
Tib	MR. ARCHER
Maid of Honour to Princess Elizabeth	MISS HALL
Alice	MISS ISABEL BATEMAN

THE BELLE'S STRATAGEM.

First acted (at the Lyceum) on June 12, 1876.

Doricourt	MR. HENRY IRVING
Mr. Hardy	MR. J. ARCHER
Sir George Touchwood	MR. BEAUMONT
Flutter	MR. BROOKE

Saville	MR. BENTLEY
Villers	MR. CARTON
Courtall	MR. STUART
Letitia Hardy	MISS ISABEL BATEMAN
Mrs. Racket	MISS VIRGINIA FRANCIS
Lady Francis Touchwood	MISS LUCY BUCKSTONE

RICHARD III.

Revived on January 29, 1877.

King Edward IV.	MR. BEAUMONT
Edward, Prince of Wales	MISS BROWN
Richard, Duke of York	MISS HARWOOD
George, Duke of Clarence	MR. WALTER BENTLEY
Richard, Duke of Gloucester	MR. HENRY IRVING
Henry, Earl of Richmond	MR. E. H. BROOKE
Cardinal Bouchier	MR. COLLETT
Duke of Buckingham	MR. T. SWINBOURNE
Duke of Norfolk	MR. HARWOOD
Lord Rivers	MR. CARTON
Lord Hastings	MR. R. C. LYONS
Lord Stanley	MR. A. W. PINERO
Lord Lovel	MR. SERJEANT
Marquis of Dorset	MR. SEYMOUR
Lord Grey	MR. ARTHUR DILLON
Sir Richard Ratcliff	MR. LOUTHER
Sir William Catesby	MR. J. ARCHER
Sir James Tyrrel	MR. A. STUART
Sir James Blunt	MR. BRANSCOMBE
Sir Robert Brackenbury	MR. H. SMYLES
Dr. Shaw	MR. TAPPING
Lord Mayor	MR. ALLEN
First Murderer	MR. T. MEAD
Second Murderer	MR. HUNTLEY
Queen Margaret	MISS BATEMAN
Queen Elizabeth	MISS PAUNCEFORT
Duchess of York	MRS. HUNTLEY
Lady Anne	MISS ISABEL BATEMAN

✓ THE LYONS MAIL.

First acted (at the Lyceum) on May 19, 1877.

Joseph Lesurques	MR. HENRY IRVING
Dubosc	MR. T. MEAD
Jerome Lesurques	MR. E. H. BROOKE
Didier	MISS LYDIA HOWARD
Joliquet	MR. F. TYARS
M. Dorval	MR. LOUTHER
Lambert	MR. GLYNDON
Guerneau	MR. COLLETT
Postmaster at Montgeron	

Coco	MR. BRANSCOMBE
Garçon at Café	MR. TAPPING
Guard	MR. HARWOOD
Postillion	MR. ALLEN
Courriol	MR. R. C. LYONS
Choppard	MR. HUNTLEY
Fouinard	MR. ARCHER
Dourochat	MR. HELPS
Julie	MISS VIRGINIA FRANCIS
Jeannette	MISS ISABELLA BATEMAN

✓ LOUIS XI.

First acted (at the Lyceum) on March 9, 1878.

Louis XI.	MR. HENRY IRVING
Nemours	MR. F. TYARS
The Dauphin	MR. ANDREWS
Cardinal D'Alby	MR. COLLETT
Philip de Commynes	MR. F. CLEMENTS
Count de Dreux	MR. PARKER
Jacques Coitier	MR. J. FERNANDEZ
Tristan l'Ermite	MR. W. BENTLEY
Oliver le Dain	MR. J. ARCHER
François de Paule	MR. T. MEAD
Monseigneur de Lude	MR. HOLLAND
The Count de Dunois	MR. LANETON
Marcel	MR. E. LYONS
Richard	MR. SMITH
Didier	MR. BRANSCOMBE
Officer of the Royal Guard	MR. HARWOOD
Montjoie	MR. CARTWRIGHT
Toison d'Or	MR. TAPPING
King's Attendants	MESSRS. EDWARDS & SIMPSON
Marie	MISS VIRGINIA FRANCIS
Jeanne	MRS. ST. JOHN
Martha	MRS. CHIPPENDALE

VANDERDECKEN.

First acted on June 8, 1878.

Philip Vanderdecken	MR. HENRY IRVING
Nils	MR. JAMES FERNANDEZ
Olaf	MR. WALTER BENTLEY
Pastor Anders Been	MR. EDMUND LYONS
Alderman Jorger	MR. A. W. PINERO
James Steffen	MR. R. LYONS
Soreen	MR. ARCHER
Nurse Birgit	MISS PAUNCEFORT
Christine	MISS JONES
Jetty	MISS HARWOOD
Old Mary	MISS ST. JOHN
Thekla	MISS ISABEL BATEMAN

HAMLET.

Revived on December 30, 1878, the first night of the management of Henry Irving.

Hamlet	MR. HENRY IRVING
Claudius	MR. FORRESTER
Polonius	MR. CHIPPENDALE
Laertes	MR. F. COOPER
Horatio	MR. T. SWINBOURNE
Osric	MR. KYRLE BELLEW
Rosencrantz	MR. A. W. PINERO
Guildenstern	MR. ELWOOD
Marcellus	MR. GIBSON
Bernardo	MR. ROBINSON
Francisco	MR. TAPPING
Reynaldo	MR. CARTWRIGHT
1st Player	MR. A. BEAUMONT
2nd Player	MR. EVERARD
Priest	MR. COLLETT
1st Gravedigger	MR. S. JOHNSON
2nd Gravedigger	MR. A. ANDREWS
Messenger	MR. HARWOOD
Ghost of Hamlet's Father	MR. T. MEAD
Gertrude	MISS PAUNCEFORT
Player Queen	MISS SEDLEY
Ophelia	MISS ELLEN TERRY

✓THE LADY OF LYONS.

First acted (at the Lyceum) on April 17, 1879.

Claude Melnotte	MR. IRVING
Colonel Damas	MR. WALTER LACY
Beauseant	MR. FORRESTER
Glavis	MR. KYRLE BELLEW
Monsieur Deschappelles	MR. C. COOPER
Landlord	MR. S. JOHNSON
Gaspar	MR. TYARS
Captain Dupont	MR. CARTWRIGHT
Major Desmoulins	MR. ANDREWS
Notary	MR. TAPPING
Servant	MR. BRANSCOMBE
Servant	MR. HOLLAND
Madame Deschappelles	MRS. CHIPPENDALE
Widow Melnotte	MISS PAUNCEFORT
Janet	MISS MAY SEDLEY
Marian	MISS HARWOOD
Pauline	MISS ELLEN TERRY

THE IRON CHEST.

First acted (at the Lyceum) on September 17, 1879.

Sir Edward Mortimer	MR. IRVING
Captain Fitzharding	MR. J. H. BARNES

Wilford	MR. NORMAN FORBES
Adam Winterton	MR. J. CARTER
Rawbold	MR. MEAD
Samson Rawbold	MR. S. JOHNSON
Peter	MR. BRANSCOMBE
Gregory	MR. TAPPING
Armstrong	MR. F. TYARS
Orson	MR. C. COOPER
Robbers	MESSRS. FERRAND, CALVERT, ETC.
Robber's Boy	MISS HARWOOD
Lady Helen	MISS FLORENCE TERRY
Blanche	MISS MYRA HOLME
Barbara	MISS ALMA MURRAY
Judith	MISS PAUNCEFORT

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

Revived on November 1, 1879.

Shylock	MR. HENRY IRVING
Duke of Venice	MR. A. BEAUMONT
Prince of Morocco	MR. F. TYARS
Antonio	MR. H. FORRESTER
Bassanio	MR. J. H. BARNES
Salanio	MR. A. ELWOOD
Salarino	MR. A. W. PINERO
Gratiano	MR. F. COOPER
Lorenzo	MR. N. FORBES
Tubal	MR. J. CARTER
Launcelot Gobbo	MR. S. JOHNSON
Old Gobbo	MR. C. COOPER
Gaoler	MR. HUDSON
Leonardo	MR. BRANSCOMBE
Balthazar	MR. TAPPING
Stephano	MR. GANTHONY
Clerk of the Court	MR. CALVERT
Nerissa	MISS FLORENCE TERRY
Jessica	MISS ALMA MURRAY
Portia	MISS ELLEN TERRY

IOLANTHE.

This version first acted on May 20, 1880.

Count Tristan	MR. IRVING
King René	MR. J. H. BARNES
Sir Geoffrey	MR. F. COOPER
Sir Almeric	MR. N. FORBES
Ebu Jahia	MR. T. MEAD
Bertrand	MR. J. CARTER
Martha	MISS PAUNCEFORT
Iolanthe	MISS ELLEN TERRY

THE CORSICAN BROTHERS.

First acted (by Henry Irving, at the Lyceum) on September 18, 1880.

M. Fabian dei Franchi	} MR. HENRY IRVING
M. Louis dei Franchi	
M. de Château Renaud	MR. W. TERRISS
Baron de Montgiron	MR. ELWOOD
M. Alfred Meynard	MR. PINERO
Colonna	MR. JOHNSON
Orlando	MR. MEAD
Antonio Sanola	MR. TAPPING
Giordano Martelli	MR. TYARS
Griffo	MR. ARCHER
Boissec	MR. CARTER
M. Verner	MR. HUDSON
Tomaso	MR. HARWOOD
M. Beauchamp	MR. FERRAND
Surgeon	MR. LOUTHER
Enilie de Lesparre	MISS EMILY FOWLER
Madame Savilia dei Franchi	MISS PAUNCEFORT
Marie	MISS HARWOOD
Coralie	MISS ALMA MURRAY
Celestine	MISS BARNETT
Estelle	MISS HOULISTON
Rose	MISS COLERIDGE
Eugénie	MISS MORELEY

THE CUP.

First acted on January 3, 1881.

GALATIANS :

Synorix	MR. IRVING
Sinnatus	MR. TERRISS
Attendant	MR. HARWOOD
Boy	MISS BROWN
Maid	MISS HARWOOD
Phoebe	MISS PAUNCEFORT
Camma	MISS ELLEN TERRY

ROMANS :

Antonius	MR. TYARS
Publius	MR. HUDSON
Nobleman	MR. MATTHISON
Herald	MR. ARCHER

OTHELLO.

Revived on May 2 and 9, 1881.

(BOOTH, Othello; IRVING, Iago; May 2.
IRVING, Othello; BOOTH, Iago; May 9.)

Othello	MR. EDWIN BOOTH
Iago	MR. HENRY IRVING
Cassio	MR. TERRISS

Brabantio	Mr. MEAD
Roderigo	Mr. PINERO
Duke	Mr. BEAUMONT
Montano	Mr. TYARS
Gratiano	Mr. CARTER
Ludovico	Mr. HUDSON
Messenger	Mr. MATTHISON
Paulo	Mr. FERRAND
Antonio	Mr. CLIFFORD
Julio	Mr. LOUTHER
Marco	Mr. HARWOOD
Emilia	Miss PAUNCEFORT
Desdemona	Miss ELLEN TERRY

TWO ROSES.

Revived on December 26, 1881.

Mr. Digby Grant . . .	Mr. HENRY IRVING
Mr. Furnival	Mr. H. HOWE
Jack Wyatt	Mr. W. TERRISS
Caleb Decie	Mr. G. ALEXANDER
Footman	Mr. HARBURY
Our Mr. Jenkins . . .	Mr. DAVID JAMES
Ida	Miss HELEN MATTHEWS
Mrs. Cupps	Miss C. EWELL
Our Mrs. Jenkins . .	Miss PAUNCEFORT
Lottie	Miss WINIFRED EMERY

ROMEO AND JULIET.

Revived on March 8, 1882.

Romeo	Mr. HENRY IRVING
Mercutio	Mr. WILLIAM TERRISS
Tybalt	Mr. CHARLES GLENNY
Paris	Mr. GEORGE ALEXANDER
Capulet	Mr. HOWE
Montague	Mr. HARBURY
Friar Laurence	Mr. FERNANDEZ
Apothecary	Mr. MEAD
Prince Escalus	Mr. TYARS
Benvolio	Mr. CHILD
Gregory	Mr. CARTER
Sampson	Mr. ARCHER
Abraham	Mr. LOUTHER
Balthasar	Mr. HUDSON
Peter	Mr. ANDREWS
Friar John	Mr. BLACK
Citizen	Mr. HARWOOD
Chorus	Mr. HOWARD RUSSELL
Page	Miss KATE BROWN
Nurse	Mrs. STIRLING
Lady Montague	Miss H. MATTHEWS
Lady Capulet	Miss L. PAYNE
Juliet	Miss ELLEN TERRY

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

Revived on October 11, 1882.

Benedick	Mr. HENRY IRVING
Don Pedro	Mr. W. TERRISS
Don John	Mr. C. GLENNY
Claudio	Mr. FORBES-ROBERTSON
Leonato	Mr. FERNANDEZ
Antonio	Mr. H. HOWE
Balthazar	Mr. J. ROBERTSON
Borachio	Mr. F. TYARS
Conrade	Mr. HUDSON
Friar Francis	Mr. MEAD
Dogberry	Mr. S. JOHNSON
Verges	Mr. STANISLAUS CALHAEM
Seacoal	Mr. ARCHER
Oatcake	Mr. HARBURY
A Sexton	Mr. CARTER
A Messenger	Mr. HAVILAND
A Boy	Miss K. BROWN
Hiero	Miss MILLWARD
Margaret	Miss HARWOOD
Ursula	Miss L. PAYNE
Beatrice	Miss ELLEN TERRY

✓ROBERT MACAIRE.

First acted (by Henry Irving, at the Lyceum) on June 15, 1883.

Robert Macaire	Mr. HENRY IRVING
Jacques Strop	Mr. J. L. TOOLE
Dumont	Mr. J. FERNANDEZ
Charles	Mr. TERRISS
Germieul	Mr. H. HOWE
Sergeant Loupy	Mr. BANCROFT
Pierre	Mr. THOMAS THORNE
Louis	Mr. ANDREWS
François	Mr. ARCHER
Clementine	Miss ELLEN TERRY
Marie	Miss ADA CAVENDISH

TWELFTH NIGHT; OR, WHAT YOU WILL.

Revived on July 8, 1884.

Malvolio	Mr. HENRY IRVING
The Duke Orsino	Mr. TERRISS
Sir Toby Belch	Mr. DAVID FISHER
Sir Andrew Aguecheek .	Mr. FRANCIS WYATT
Fabian	Mr. ANDREWS
Clown	Mr. S. CALHAEM
Sebastian	Mr. FRED TERRY
Antonio	Mr. H. HOWE
A Sea Captain	Mr. TYARS

AND HENRY IRVING

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Valentine	MR. HAVILAND
Curio	MR. MELLISH
A Friar	MR. HARBURY
First Officer	MR. ARCHER
Second Officer	MR. HARWOOD
Olivia	MISS ROSE LECLERCQ
Maria	MISS L. PAYNE
Viola	MISS ELLEN TERRY

OLIVIA.

Revived on May 28, 1885.

Dr. Primrose	MR. IRVING
Moses	MR. NORMAN FORBES
Squire Thornhill	MR. W. TERRISS
Mr. Burchell	MR. WENMAN
Leigh	MR. TYARS
Farmer Flamborough	MR. H. HOWE
Polly Flamborough	MISS COLERIDGE
Phoebe	MISS MILLS
Gipsy Woman	MISS BARNETT
Mrs. Primrose	MISS L. PAYNE
Dick	MISS F. HOLLAND
Bill	MISS M. HOLLAND
Sophia	MISS WINIFRED EMERY
Olivia	MISS ELLEN TERRY

FAUST.

First acted on December 19, 1885.

MORTALS :

Faust	MR. CONWAY
Valentine	MR. ALEXANDER
Frosch	MR. HARBURY
Altmayer	MR. HAVILAND
Brander	MR. F. TYARS
Siebel	MR. JOHNSON
Student	MR. NORMAN FORBES
Burgomaster	MR. H. HOWE
Citizens	{ MR. HELMSLEY
	{ MR. LOUTHER
Soldier	MR. M. HARVEY
Martha	MRS. STIRLING
Bessy	MISS L. PAYNE
Ida	MISS BARNETT
Alice	MISS COLERIDGE
Catherin	MISS MILLS
Margaret	MISS ELLEN TERRY

SPIRITS :

Mephistopheles	MR. HENRY IRVING
	{ MR. MEAD
	{ MR. CARTER
Witches	{ MR. ARCHER
	{ MR. CLIFFORD

WERNER.

First acted at the Lyceum on June 1, 1887.

Werner	MR. HENRY IRVING
Ulric	MR. GEORGE ALEXANDER
Gabor	MR. T. WENMAN
Stralenheim	MR. C. GLENNY
Idenstein	MR. HOWE
Rodolph	MR. HAVILAND
Fritz	MR. J. CARTER
Henrick	MR. ARCHER
Eric	MR. CALVERT
Arnheim	MR. CLIFFORD
Ludwig	MR. HARVEY
Josephine	MISS ELLEN TERRY
Ida Stralenheim	MISS EMERY

THE DEAD HEART.

Revived on September 28, 1889.

Robert Landry	MR. HENRY IRVING
The Abbé Latour	MR. BANCROFT
The Count de St. Valery	MR. HAVILAND
Arthur de St. Valery	MR. GORDON CRAIG
Legrand	MR. ARTHUR STIRLING
Toupet	MR. EDWARD RIGHTON
Rebout	MR. F. TYARS
Michel	MR. CLIFFORD
Jean	MR. HARVEY
Pierre	MR. TAYLOR
Jocrisse	MR. ARCHER
Guiscard	MR. BLACK
A Smith	MR. RAYNOR
A Crier	MR. DAVIS
A Woman	MRS. CARTER
Cerisette	MISS KATE PHILLIPS
Rose	MISS COLERIDGE
Catherine Duval	MISS ELLEN TERRY

RAVENSWOOD.

This version first acted on September 20, 1890.

Edgar (the Master of Ravenswood)	MR. IRVING
Hayston of Bucklaw	MR. TERRISS
Caleb Balderstone	MR. MACKINTOSH
Craigenfelt	MR. WENMAN
Sir William Ashton	MR. ALFRED BISHOP
The Marquis of Athole	MR. MACKLIN
Bide-the-Bent	MR. H. HOWE
Henry Ashton	MR. GORDON CRAIG
Moncrieff	MR. TYARS

Thornton	MR. HAVILAND
A Priest	MR. LACY
Lockhard	MR. DAVIS
Lady Ashton	MISS LE THIÈRE
Ailsie Gourlay	MISS MARRIOTT
Annie Winnie	MRS. PAUNCEFORT
Lucy Ashton	MISS ELLEN TERRY

KING HENRY VIII.

Revived on January 5, 1892.

King Henry VIII.	MR. WILLIAM TERRISS
Cardinal Wolsey	MR. IRVING
Cardinal Campeius	MR. BEAUMONT
Capucius.	MR. TABB
Cranmer	MR. ARTHUR STIRLING
Duke of Norfolk	MR. WENMAN
Duke of Buckingham	MR. FORBES ROBERTSON
Duke of Suffolk	MR. TYARS
Earl of Surrey	MR. CLARENCE HAGUE
Lord Chamberlain	MR. ALFRED BISHOP
Gardiner	MR. LACY
Lord Sands	MR. GILBERT FARQUHAR
Sir Henry Guildford	MR. HARVEY
Sir Thomas Lovell	MR. STEWART
Sir Anthony Denny	MR. DAVIS
Sir Nicholas Vaux	MR. SEYMOUR
Cromwell	MR. GORDON CRAIG
Griffith	MR. HOWE
Gentlemen	{ MR. JOHNSON
	{ MR. ARCHER
Garter, King-at-Arms	MR. BELMORE
Surveyor to Duke of Buck-ingham	MR. HAVILAND
Brandon	MR. SELDON
Sergeant-at-Arms	MR. POWELL
A Messenger	MR. LORRISS
A Scribe	MR. REYNOLDS
A Secretary	MR. CUSHING
Queen Katherine	MISS ELLEN TERRY
Anne Bullen	MISS VIOLET VANBRUGH
An Old Lady	MISS LE THIÈRE
Patience	MISS PAUNCEFORT

KING LEAR.

Revived on November 10, 1892.

Lear	MR. IRVING
Edgar	MR. WILLIAM TERRISS
Edmund	MR. FRANK COOPER
Earl of Gloster	MR. ALFRED BISHOP
Earl of Kent	MR. W. J. HOLLOWAY

Duke of Cornwall	MR. HAGUE
Duke of Albany	MR. TYARS
King of France	MR. PERCIVAL
Duke of Burgundy	MR. BOND
Curan	MR. HARVEY
Old Man	MR. HOWE
Fool	MR. HAVILAND
Oswald	MR. GORDON CRAIG
Physician	MR. LACY
A Knight	MR. TABB
A Gentleman	MR. IAN ROBERTSON
An Officer	MR. LORRISS
A Herald	MR. BELMORE
A Messenger	MR. POWELL
Goneril	MISS ADA DYAS
Regan	MISS MAUD MILTON
Cordelia	MISS ELLEN TERRY

BECKET.

First acted on February 6, 1893.

Thomas Becket	MR. IRVING
Henry II	MR. WILLIAM TERRISS
King Louis of France	MR. BOND
Gilbert Foliot	MR. LACY
Roger	MR. BEAUMONT
Bishop of Hereford	MR. CUSHING
Hilary	MR. ARCHER
John of Salisbury	MR. BISHOP
Herbert of Bosham	MR. HAVILAND
Edward Grim	MR. W. J. HOLLOWAY
Sir Reginald Fitzurse	MR. FRANK COOPER
Sir Richard de Brito	MR. TYARS
Sir William de Tracy	MR. HAGUE
Sir Hugh de Morville	MR. PERCIVAL
De Broc	MR. TABB
Richard de Hastings	MR. SELDON
The Youngest Knight Templar	MR. GORDON CRAIG
Lord Leicester	MR. HARVEY
Philip de Eleemosyna	MR. HOWE
Herald	MR. L. BELMORE
Geoffrey	MASTER LEO BYRNE
Retainers	{ MR. YELDHAM
	{ MR. LORRISS
Countrymen	{ MR. JOHNSON
	{ MR. REYNOLDS
John of Oxford	MR. IAN ROBERTSON
Servant	MR. DAVIS
Eleanor of Aquitaine	MISS GENEVIÈVE WARD
Margery	MISS KATE PHILLIPS
Rosamund de Clifford	MISS ELLEN TERRY

KING ARTHUR

First acted on January 12, 1895.

King Arthur	MR. IRVING
Sir Lancelot	MR. FORBES ROBERTSON
Sir Mordred	MR. FRANK COOPER
Sir Kay	MR. TYARS
Sir Gawaine	MR. HAGUE
Sir Bedevere	MR. FULLER MELLISH
Sir Agravaine	MR. LACY
Sir Percivale	MR. BUCKLEY
Sir Lavaine	MR. JULIUS KNIGHT
Sir Dagonet	MR. HARVEY
Merlin	MR. VALENTINE
Messenger	MR. BELMORE
Gaoler	MR. TABB
Morgan le Fay	MISS GENEVIÈVE WARD
Elaine	MISS LENA ASHWELL
Clarissant	MISS ANNIE HUGHES
Spirit of the Lake	MISS MAUD MILTON
Guinevere	MISS ELLEN TERRY

A STORY OF WATERLOO.

First acted (at the Lyceum) on May 4, 1895.

Originally produced at the Prince's Theatre, Bristol, on September 21, 1894, and acted, for the first time in London, at the Garrick Theatre, on December 17, of the same year, the cast being the same in all cases.

Corporal Gregory Brewster	MR. HENRY IRVING
Sergeant Archie McDonald	{ MR. FULLER MELLISH
Colonel James Midwinter	MR. HAVILAND
Norah Brewster	MISS ANNIE HUGHES

DON QUIXOTE.

First acted on May 4, 1895.

Master Quixada	MR. IRVING
Sancho Panza	MR. JOHNSON
Father Perez	MR. HAVILAND
Pedro	MR. ARCHER
A Peasant	MR. REYNOLDS
Antonia	MISS DE SILVA
Muleteers	MESSRS. BELMORE & RIVINGTON
Maria	MISS MILTON
Dulcinea	MRS. LACY
An Old Woman	MR. INNES
Girls	{ MISSES FOSTER, K. HARWOOD, and AILSA CRAIG.

CYMBELINE.

Revived on September 22, 1896.

BRITONS :

Cymbeline	MR. MACKLIN
Cloten	MR. NORMAN FORBES
Posthumus Leonatus	MR. FRANK COOPER
Belarius	MR. FREDERIC ROBINSON
Guiderius	MR. BEN WEBSTER
Arviragus	MR. GORDON CRAIG
Pisanio	MR. TYARS
Cornelius	MR. LACY
Two British Captains	{ MR. ARCHER { MR. NEEDHAM
Two British Lords	{ MR. CLARENCE HAGUE { MR. BELMORE
Queen	MISS GENEVIÈVE WARD
Helen	MRS. TYARS
Imogen	MISS ELLEN TERRY

ROMANS :

Iachimo	HENRY IRVING
Philario	MR. FULLER MELLISH
Caius Lucius	MR. H. COOPER CLIFFE
A Roman Captain	MR. TABB

PETER THE GREAT.

First acted on January 1, 1898.

Peter the Great	HENRY IRVING
Alexis	MR. ROBERT TABER
Prince Menshikoff	MR. COOPER CLIFFE
Peter Tolstoi	MR. MACKINTOSH
Admiral Apraxin	MR. W. FARREN, Jun.
Prince Dolgorouki	MR. BELMORE
Prince Abraham Lapoukhine	MR. BRYDONE
Prince Zabouroff	MR. ARCHER
Mansouroff	MR. FULLER MELLISH
Alexander Kikine	MR. BEN WEBSTER
Jacob Ignatieff	MR. TYARS
Field-marshal Count Daun	MR. F. H. MACKLIN
Colonel Bauer	MR. NORMAN FORBES
Major Steinmitz	MR. S. JOHNSON
Two Neapolitan Captains	{ MR. PASSMORE { MR. HOWARD
Carlo	MR. REYNOLDS
Officers	{ MR. TABB { MR. DAVISS
Eudoxia	MISS ROCKMAN
Euphrosine	MISS BARRYMORE
Masha	MISS SHELTON
Catherine	MISS ELLEN TERRY

MADAME SANS-GÊNE.

First acted on April 10, 1897.

Napoleon	HENRY IRVING
Lefebvre	MR. FRANK COOPER
Fouché	MR. MACKINTOSH
Comte de Neipperg	MR. BEN WEBSTER
Savary, Duc de Rovigo . .	MR. F. H. MACKLIN
Despréaux	MR. NORMAN FORBES
Saint-Marsan	MR. H. COOPER CLIFFE
Roustan	MR. TYARS
Jasmin	MR. LACY
Leroy	MR. WM. FARREN, Junr.
Cop	MR. ARCHER
The Chevalier Corso . . .	MR. CLARENCE HAGUE
Canouville	MR. FULLER MELLISH
De Brigode	MR. BELMORE
Vabontrain	MR. S. JOHNSON
Caroline, Queen of Naples .	{ MISS GERTRUDE KINGSTON
Elisa, Princess of Piombina .	{ MISS JULIA ARTHUR
Madame de Rovigo	MISS MARY RORKE
La Roussotte	MISS MAUD MILTON
Julie	MISS BRENDA GIBSON
Toinon	MISS EDITH CRAIG
Catherine (Madame Sans-Gêne)	{ MISS ELLEN TERRY

THE MEDICINE MAN.

First acted on May 4, 1898.

WEST-END :

Dr. Tregenna	HENRY IRVING
Lord Belhurst	MR. NUTCOMBE GOULD
Colonel Anson	MR. FRANK COOPER
Canon Slade-Smith	MR. NORMAN FORBES
Algernon Warrington . . .	MR. BEN WEBSTER
Dr. Rainham	MR. ROBERT TABER
Sir Clement Hope	MR. COOPER CLIFFE
Captain Stopton	MR. EARDLEY HOWARD
Mr. Braybrook	MR. H. PASSMORE
Servant	MR. ALBERT SIMS
Mrs. Culling	MISS ROSE LECLERCQ
Lady Agatha Warrington . .	MISS MAUD MILTON
Hon. Alicia Drake	MISS RAY ROCKMAN
Lady Mary Mayne	MISS SUZANNE SHELTON
Dora Bell	MISS VYNOR
Hon. Sylvia Wynford . . .	MISS ELLEN TERRY

EAST-END :

Bill Burge	MR. MACKINTOSH
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Sam Cheeseman	MR. FULLER MELLISH
Carrots	MR. L. BELMORE
Joe Green	MR. T. REYNOLDS
Charley Tagg	MR. ARCHER
Tommy Long	MR. JONES
Mrs. Burge	MISS DOLORES DRUMMOND

ROBESPIERRE.

First acted on April 15, 1899.

Maximilien Robespierre . .	HENRY IRVING
Clarisse de Maluçon . . .	MISS ELLEN TERRY
Olivier	MR. KYRLE BELLEW
Augustin Robespierre . . .	MR. F. D. DAVISS
Benjamin Vaughan	MR. H. COOPER CLIFFE
Lebas	MR. FULLER MELLISH
Buonarotti	MR. LEONARD CALVERT
Couton	MR. CHARLES LOCKE
St. Just	MR. T. TAMWORTH
Old Duplay	MR. CLIFFORD BOWN
Simon Duplay	MR. S. JOHNSON
Maurice Duplay	MR. F. HAYES
Didier	MR. C. H. KENNEY
Gerard	MR. W. GRAHAM
Billaud-Varennes	MR. LOUIS CALVERT
Jagot	MR. J. HATCH
Amar	MR. W. SHARPE
Youllard	MR. G. BARTON
Rulh	MR. F. M. PAGET
Vadier	MR. JAMES CRAIG
Thuriot	MR. LIONEL BELMORE
Tallien	MR. LAURENCE IRVING
Fouché	MR. C. DODSWORTH
Lecointre	MR. F. FERGUSON
Legendre	MR. A. MORING
Héron	MR. F. TYARS
Count Harday de Hauteville	MR. JUNIUS BOOTH
Haly	MR. R. P. TABB
Another Jailor	MR. W. MARION
Collas	MR. J. ARCHER
Barassin	MR. T. REYNOLDS
Urbain	MR. ERIC BLIND
A Workman	MR. A. JENNINGS
Marie Thérèse	MISS WINIFRED FRASER
Madame Duplay	MISS CROSSE
Madame Lebas	MISS SUZANNE SHELTON
Cornelie	MISS GEORGIE ESMOND
Victoire	MISS IDA YEOLAND
Madame de Narbonne . . .	MISS MAUD MILTON
Madame de Lavergne . . .	MISS EDITH CRAIG

CORIO LANUS.

Revived on April 15, 1901.

ROMANS :

Caius Marcius Coriolanus . .	HENRY IRVING
Titus Lartius	MR. LUGG
Cominius	MR. TYARS
Menenius Agrippa	MR. J. H. BARNES
Sicinius Velutus	MR. JAMES HEARN
Junius Brutus	MR. LAURENCE IRVING
Young Marcius	MISS QUEENIE TARVIN
A Senator	MR. TABB
A Herald	MR. NASH
An Ædile	MR. MARK PATON
A Soldier	MR. FISHER

1st Citizen	MR. C. DODSWORTH
2nd Citizen	MR. CLIFFORD BOWN
3rd Citizen	MR. KENNEY
4th Citizen	MR. REYNOLDS
Volumnia	MISS ELLEN TERRY
Virgilia	MISS MABEL HACKNEY
Valeria	MISS MAUD MILTON
Gentlewoman	MISS EDITH THOMPSON

VOLSCIANS :

Tullus Aufidius	MR. W. E. ASHCROFT
Lieut. to Aufidius	MR. MARSDEN
Volscian Lord	MR. BULLER
Sentinel	MR. L. BELMORE
1st Servingman	MR. J. ARCHER
2nd Servingman	MR. ABLETT
A Citizen of Antium	MR. LAMBERT

THE LYCEUM AND HENRY IRVING

THE LAST PERFORMANCE AT THE LYCEUM

SATURDAY AFTERNOON, JULY 19, 1902.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

Shylock	HENRY IRVING
Bassanio	MR. TYRONE POWER
The Duke of Venice	MR. R. P. TABB
Antonio	MR. LAURENCE IRVING
The Prince of Morocco	MR. F. TYARS
Salanio	MR. W. LUGG
Salarino	MR. LIONEL BELMORE
Gratiano	MR. H. B. STANFORD
Lorenzo	MR. W. E. ASHCROFT
Tubal	MR. J. ARCHER
Launcelot Gobbo	MR. C. DODSWORTH
Old Gobbo	MR. T. REYNOLDS
Gaoler	MR. W. GRAHAM
Leonardo	MR. H. R. COOK
Balthazar	MR. W. MARION
Stephano	MR. W. ABLETT
Clerk of the Court	MR. F. D. DAVISS
Jessica	MISS MABEL HACKNEY
Nerissa	MISS ROSALIND IVAN
and	
Portia	MISS ELLEN TERRY
<hr/>	
Stage Manager	MR. H. J. LOVEDAY
Acting Manager	MR. BRAM STOKER

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